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The

STORY *of* CHURCH UNION IN CANADA

BY

REV. S. D. CHOWN, D.D., LL.D.

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BY

REV. S. D. CHOWN, D.D., LL.D.

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By SAMUEL DWIGHT CHOWN

TO MY WIFE

WHO FOR MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY HAS
COMPANIED WITH ME IN THE CARES, BURDENS,
AND INSPIRATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN
MINISTRY, AND WHO IN YEARS OF CONFLICT
FOR THE KINGDOM, FRONTED MANY
DANGERS WITHOUT FLINCHING, WITH
GRATITUDE I DEDICATE THIS BOOK.

334609

R. W. Lee

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FOREWORD

THIS is a story which ought to be told. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to find its exact parallel in all Church history.

Unions there have been, some of them on a large scale and of great significance, but the union of which this volume tells is marked by features that put it in a class by itself. It would be an unforgivable wrong to the future to leave unrecorded the history of the genesis and progress of a movement so big with possibilities and so far reaching in its influence. But to have permanent value the story must be told with perfect candor and by one in possession of the inside facts. That hours of doubt and difficulty arose is not surprising. What is memorable is the way the darkness gave place to light and the difficulties were resolved, giving us good hope that the Head of the Church was leading us forward to a goal of his own devising. A frank and sympathetic record of the reasons for the failure of the movement to reach perfect success should not be withheld.

Dr. Chown has brought to his task qualifications of a very high order. His membership on the Joint Union Committee extended from its initial stages to the supreme moment when

he pronounced the words which united three denominations into one. He often presided at the sessions of the Union Committee. He was General Superintendent of the Methodist Church during the most trying and delicate hours of negotiation for union. His office made him possessor of invaluable correspondence which throws important light on the negotiations and enables him to write with the authority gained from first hand knowledge. He was appointed Chairman of all Commissions appointed to organize the departmental work of the new Church, and also the first Chairman of the Committee to write the Manual for the government of The United Church.

It is inevitable that a history of the union written by one earnestly desiring its consummation and working heart and soul to bring it about should partake at times of the nature of a vindication. Dr. Chown writes as an advocate as well as a historian. For this he deserves our best thanks. A possible sub-title to this volume might be "Church Union Vindicated."

Dr. Chown writes honestly, purposing to record nothing that is not strictly true; but he writes as a veteran who gave the best years of his life to a cause which he has lived to see triumph. His candour and his passion have enabled him to give us a book of high merit,

to which future Church historians will turn with safety and satisfaction.

I have read the manuscript with deep and abiding interest and shall welcome the printed volume heartily.

S. P. ROSE.

PREFACE

THIS book is not intended to be a dissertation upon Church Union in general, nor an exposition *in extenso* of the theological and other aspects of the particular union consummated in Canada on June 10, 1925, though these matters will receive incidental reference. It aims to be a careful and truthful history of that movement as it presented itself from time to time to one who was an active participant in its progress from its beginning to the end, and who had excellent opportunities of knowing it from the inside.

This book was not written at the instance of any authority in The United Church, nor for the purpose of making personal gain; but for the love of truth and in the interest of a cause which has long challenged the attention of the writer and commanded his activity. It has been penned in love and charity, and with the hope of creating a better understanding of the real inwardness of the movement even on the part of some who were opposed to its consummation.

It aims to satisfy a great and widely expressed curiosity on the part of many in different parts of the world, and especially to give information to workers in various countries who are endeavouring to carry the

principle of unity to broader applications in numerous branches of the Church of Christ.

The writer believes that the importance and sacredness of the issue demand such treatment before wrong impressions become embalmed in memory and find an acceptance which can afterwards be removed only with great difficulty.

In considering the question, clear and conclusive thought requires that at the outset the exact significance to be attached to three words which frequently occur in any discussion of the subject should be made quite evident. In the debate about "Church Unity," which is now cropping up almost everywhere within Christendom, the word unity is often assumed to be equivalent to "union." But within Canada at least, owing to exigencies which arose in the local debate, unity and union are not synonymous terms. The word unity has come to carry a more restricted meaning than union. This was commonly and tacitly acknowledged by opposing parties to the issue in this country. Unity was conceived to be an antecedent condition to a successful union, but was far from organic union itself. Indeed, many non-concurrents declared themselves to be strongly in favour of unity, but steadfastly drew back from union or amalgamation. In the following pages, therefore, the word unity will stand for a spirit

of good will, but a spirit which in the opinion of unionists needed to be clothed upon with a unified organism to permit it to reach its legitimate and most effective goal.

The word co-operation, in the parlance of the Canadian movement, covered any mutual ecclesiastical activity, from the mere mingling of two or more congregations for purposes of worship or humanity up to common or united action in college education, social service work, and in several other directions which enabled the associated Churches to render more effectively and economically services essential to public welfare, without for the time being losing their denominational distinctiveness.

Union is a word of another category altogether. It implies more than a sympathetic spiritual relationship, and looks beyond the expedients of co-operation. It predicates an organization under one government, and with one central power in control of administration. Union, however, requires no further definition, for it is now successfully exemplified to the eyes of the world in The United Church of Canada, and wonderfully manifested in the amalgamation of the United Free Church and the Church of Scotland in the Old Land.

CHAPTER I

MOTIVES OF THE MOVEMENT

THE motives leading to the union of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches in Canada were manifold, but may be classified under three divisions, as spiritual, patriotic, and economic. In every respect they were worthy of Christian men, from the beginning of negotiations, in 1904, until the glorious consummation of the union on June 10, 1925.

There is no reliable evidence to show that the parties thereto were animated by considerations of what they might get. On the contrary, they were sincerely moved by the prospect of what they might contribute to produce the highest and most complete expression possible to them, and to other denominations which might join with them, of a Christian Church in Canada, which would be more fully representative of the mind of Christ than any hitherto, and be the most effective instrument available for the fulfilment of the divine purpose of human redemption.

The promoters of union were possessed by a conviction, that the mission of Jesus was not only to save mankind from sin and its consequences, but also to unite the world in a

brotherhood of love and fellowship, to be known as the Kingdom of God. It appeared to them that Jesus foresaw that the evident unity of his disciples yet to be would be a means of persuading the world to believe in Him as the One sent of God to be the Saviour of men, and the spiritual leader of humanity. They discerned also in this fellowship one of the first principles of the Christian Church.

The opponents of union have very strongly condemned some unionists, who, they allege, have assumed that the intercessory prayer of Jesus, recorded in the Gospel of St. John, "that they all may be one," is a petition for organic union. They contend, that "this prayer of Jesus was for spiritual unity only, and that to interpret it as applying to a united Church is unscientific, emotional, and expresses only the predilection of the interpreter."

Their exegesis of the passage may be readily and cheerfully conceded. But that concession does not much affect the case for union upon scriptural grounds, much less does it weaken the strength of the argument drawn from the conditions favourable to union which vindicates the movement as one inspired by providential direction.

It is quite clear, also, that if this prayer of Jesus does not support the concept of organic union, it cannot be quoted to refute or condemn

it. The unity that Jesus prayed for must at least carry indisputable and easily recognized evidence of its reality. No countenance whatever is given in the Bible for denominational divisions; on the contrary, the spirit of some early Christians, which led them to say, "I am of Paul and I of Apollos and I of Cephas," was disavowed and strongly rebuked in the New Testament as creating a spirit of rivalry and uncharity.

The unity of an "invisible Church" is pleaded for as a substitute for the union of visible Churches; but it must be agreed that it is not easy to see the visible unity of a Church that is invisible.

Incidentally, it may be said, that, after much study, very earnest and discerning Christian leaders have been unable to discover any manifestation of unity among Churches comparable in effect to that to be anticipated in organic union.

A group of Presbyterian ministers collaborating in Oxford University, in answer to the question, "What degree of unity in the matter of order will be necessary in a United Church?" made reply by saying: "Such unity in order as will preserve and manifest the spiritual unity which the whole Church or Body of Christ possesses by its relation to its Divine Head; that is such as will secure the co-ordinating of the work of all parts, and participation in Holy

Communion." The co-ordination of the work of all parts can proceed only from a unified directing body.

This authoritative testimony maintains that, while there must be spiritual unity in the Body of Christ, there should be organic union also. In other words, the diffused spiritual unity can function most effectively only when it has localized and concrete manifestation.

Since the convictions of unionists are not critically affected by a disputed interpretation of the passage of scripture already referred to, the advocates of union are left free to find further support for their cause from the pillars of reason.

Even if organic union is not of divine appointment, but only a providential expedient to give visibility and effectiveness to the unity for which Christ prayed, it is amply justified. It will fall into the same category with a hundred other practices of the Christian Church in the course of developing and applying its working strength and resources, practices which obviously are not of specific divine appointment, but which carry the credentials of Christian common sense.

The peculiar reasons urged by opponents of union for continuing divided communions frequently show, that they are not fully possessed of the spirit of unity, even when asserting their Christian love. The love which

should permeate the Church of Christ is a force integrating unity, and, when that spirit is sufficiently developed, it will naturally find the way of merging into union.

Until organized opposition sprang up in Canada, the spirit of unity seemed strong enough to call for the consummation of union as speedily as possible. At no time, even after the opposition had become organized and vocal, did the unionist leaders or people falter in their belief that they were pursuing the will of God. The further study to which they were challenged by the difficulties attending their adventure of faith confirmed them in their belief that denominational divisions were not the offspring of love. They could not resist the conclusion that the prayer of Jesus for unity was not being fulfilled in their denominational midst. They were constrained to believe, that the conducting of the stream of brotherly love through the narrow channels of group partizanships was fatal to the representation of its true spirit.

The substance of the Christian religion is fellowship with God and man. The principal purpose of theology is to explain how this fellowship can be brought about and maintained.

The unionists were persuaded that the injury inflicted upon real Christianity by its opponents was almost negligible compared

with the stigma from which it suffered through the unhappy isolations of its professed friends. To permit non-essential theological differences to divide believers in the saving grace and power of Jesus is the very antithesis of the teaching of Christ. "Forbid him not because he followeth not us," was the dictum of the Master. The apologetic value of religion is nullified if, for any reason, the criterion of discipleship which Jesus affirmed is set aside for any theological shibboleth. Jesus was prepared to rest the credentials of his followers upon, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another."

The notion that one's own Church has a monopoly of the truth as it is in Jesus is a relic of intellectual childhood. No denomination to-day has exclusive possession of the truth to proclaim which it originally came into being. Its leaven has touched all the Churches, and has at least produced filaments of understanding if not of approval between all evangelical Christians. But if, as is contended, each denomination is marked by some excellence peculiar to itself, that should only be an additional reason for merging all their excellencies into a Christian endeavour to eliminate error, to discover weakness, and produce a Church endowed with the greatest strength and perfection Christendom can assemble. The prayer of Jesus for unity remains unful-



S. A. Chown

filled so long as two Churches carry on where only one might equally or better supply the spiritual need of a locality. It is not fulfilled wherever the spirit of competition is manifested. It is not fulfilled when members of ostensibly the same family refuse to eat at the same sacramental table, and pass each other on the street as though they were only very distant relations. It is not fulfilled where any of the resources of the Church, either of men or money, are expended in local efforts which are not necessary to spread the Kingdom of God upon earth.

The presence of two Churches doing the same work in a small locality indicates in one of them a lurking feeling that in some way it is superior to the other. This in itself is opposed to perfect fellowship. Acquiescence in the spirit of disunity is impossible for those who desire to be loyal to Christ. The spirit of union is an unfailing criterion of real democracy. To answer the desire for unrestrained fellowship was a primary motive leading toward union in the component parties forming The United Church of Canada. Whatever motives may be ascribed to unionists, they sincerely believed that the unity for which Jesus prayed could be more convincingly expressed through a United Church than by any other means or method.

The signs of the times also pressed the problem of Church Union upon their attention.

These signs were regarded as fingers of Providence pointing out the way and will of God.

The natural man reveals himself in his loyalty to preferences. The spiritual man reveals himself by his loyalty to Christ, and dismisses preferences as an encumbrance or a snare.

The children of Issachar, in Old Testament times, were commended as "men of understanding to discern the times to know what Israel ought to do." Christ expects his followers to read the signs of the times and not to read them wrongly. He expects the pure in heart to see God in the working of history, and to recognize his works as revealing a further divine purpose.

With few exceptions, Churches of Christ within Christendom are being visited by a breath from heaven calculated to lead each Christian to look into the face of his fellow and to call him brother.

Unity movements are crystalizing so rapidly that it is almost impossible to keep abreast of them. They are so numerous as to constitute a significant sign of the times.

Union synchronizes with the general movements of society, and the Church, in common with other departments of life, needs to be reorganized in the light of modern demands. Doubtless this is a time for new and radical

departures. Advantage should be taken of the advancing waves of thought which characterize our day, and we should go with them as far as they will wisely carry us. The gaze of humanity is forward and action taken now will probably affect millenniums to come and be felt in eternity.

It is impressive to note, that the great men, whose range of thought and of influence constitutes them leaders of humanity, are provoking the Churches to consider seriously their unification. They are calling upon the Christian Church for light and for leading away from the darkness and chaos which, unless soon dispelled, will threaten our civilization with terrible deterioration.

Sir Philip Gibbs, the noted novelist and war correspondent, declares: "The Christian Church is the strongest organized moral force in the world, and if the Church would say there should be no more war, then there would be no war."

David Lloyd George is reported to have said, that "If another war should take place, the Churches might as well shut up shop."

Such men recognize that the League of Nations, and other organizations for the promotion of peace, need the support of the organized conscience of the world; and they look to the Church to interpret with one influential voice the moral sense of Christendom.

Diplomats, statesmen and publicists of many kinds are united in opinion about this need, and await with anxiety a more effective impact of international righteousness and brotherly love, as a condition upon which they may rely in seeking to settle the disordered affairs of this distracted world. If Christendom fulfilled its mission, it would provide a conscience and a soul which would make the task of peace easy. Evidently it is not doing this effectively now, and will not in its divided condition.

It is no wonder that the Pope, taking advantage of the present state of affairs, should charge the Great War upon Martin Luther. It is amazing that between Christian countries there should be such an immense amount of parleying about equality of fighting power and national security in negotiating terms of peace. Why not down tools of warfare and learn war no more? A Christendom possessed of and by a thorough-going united Christianity would accomplish that.

Opponents of union in Canada alleged that unionists were afflicted with a species of ecclesiastical megalomania. They assumed that the unionists were exalted above measure by ambition to build a big national Church. This is entirely a misconception. There is no evidence to show that such an idea played any part in the motives leading to the formation of The United Church. The conception is entirely

foreign to the spirit of the movement. The ascription of a desire or intention to make of The United Church a religio-political machine is a groundless chimera, as will be shown in a subsequent chapter. The appeal of a national Church, which was sometimes mentioned, was upon perfectly Christian and patriotic grounds. It was not tinged with selfishness of any kind. Underlying it was the hope that not three denominations only, but with a union embracing other denominations also, the institutions of religion in our country would be more influential in creating a stronger inclination to godliness. Religion and patriotism could therein combine for the country's good.

There have been factors, geographic, political and economic, tending to divide the spiritual interests of the Canadian people. For a time there was fear that the back of Confederation might be broken at the head of the Great Lakes. It was a true instinct that guided the leaders of Church Union to believe, that bodies of intelligent and consecrated men, who in many instances would be exponents of public thought, and in some cases occupy high office in the government of Canada and its provinces, foregrounding from all parts of the Dominion, and uniting in conferences and committees for discussion and action in respect to great problems affecting in common the citizens of the country, would tend to unify understanding

and sentiment, and be a strong influence in holding together in mutual loyalty and aspiration all parts of the nation.

But a still stronger appeal to patriotism came from the task of Christianizing an immense territory shortly to be populated by millions of people of foreign birth, ideals and traditions. It was believed that this task could not be accomplished with reasonable speed by competing Churches duplicating their resources upon a single task. Ecclesiastical statesmen felt, that the Church of Christ was in a position of trusteeship for Christianizing the nation, and evolving the highest type of civilization possible within the new opportunity presented to Canada.

The negotiating Churches were the more moved to persevere in their design by the unrest of native Christians in foreign lands under the régime of denominationalism. It is becoming increasingly evident that the impact of the gospel of Jesus in distant parts of the world is seriously weakened by denominational shibboleths and divisions. Native Christians have no use for our divisions, and cannot understand the immense importance we attach to them. They find not a shadow of Christian principle in many problems about which we debate with seeming seriousness. In several cases already the native leaders within Christian Churches are moving to

achieve union among themselves by the creation of national Churches. In so doing they are actuated by the purest motives. They say to us at home: "Hitherto you have been sending us the gospel message through many separate channels, Low Church, High Church, Baptist, Wesleyan, American Methodist, and a half dozen others. We know that this was inevitable, but we don't mean to keep those channels separate among ourselves any longer."

The fact is that a sectarian world, with its strife, jangling and wrangling, does not present to the non-Christian world a gospel which it will receive.

It is reported of Dr. John R. Mott, that, in the Edinburgh Missionary Conference, he declared: "We are defeated before we begin our work of converting the heathen by our divisions."

A Mohammedan official of high rank said to a Christian leader: "Excellence, if you Christians wish to convert us Mohammedans, you must agree among yourselves as to what Christianity is before you preach it to us. We are one and cannot understand your disagreements and contradictions."

It is clearly evident that the Christian Churches have the choice presented to them of union or comparative failure.

This conception of Christianity, hidden from the wise and prudent of the older Churches, is

now being revealed unto babies in foreign lands. One missionary Church said, "If within three years you cannot lead us into unity by your unity at home, we shall achieve it for ourselves, and leave you on one side." (Quoted from an address by the Bishop of Liverpool.)

The last Jerusalem Council, by its constituent elements, its spirit and deliberations, was a striking confirmation of the existence of a spirit of restlessness under denominationalism in Oriental lands, and also of a disposition to profit by the advice of native converts. This is not merely a symptom of national spirit. It is an instance of the cohesion which Christian fellowship produces. It indicates an evolution of genuine Christianity amongst them, and is prophetic of larger unions. The United Church of Canada is a serious effort to meet this new demand, so far as its own mission work is concerned, whether in Canada, Newfoundland, Bermuda, or its foreign mission fields.

It is gratifying to realize, that the wider outlook upon the missionary world that has come by the inclusion of the foreign missions of three Churches under one management has been an inexpressible blessing to the members and adherents of The United Church. Just as an individual is not conscious of the act of physical growth, so there are some United Churchmen who have not yet realized their

growth in outlook and sympathy and consequent development of Christian character; but there can be no doubt in the mind of a careful observer that such growth is proceeding, and that it will be more manifest as the years go by.

The unionists were also moved forward by assurances, which came to them from time to time, that the example of Canada would be an incentive and inspiration to Christians in other parts of the world to go and do likewise. In this there has been no disappointment, but very frequent and happy surprises. The frequent references made to the Canadian example in discussions approaching the problems of unity and union, the numerous requests for the literature of the movement, and the eagerness with which addresses upon the subject have been sought, speak eloquently as to the influence of the movement in Canada extending far beyond its geographic bounds. Hovering above the whole complex of motives, spiritual and patriotic, there hung a cloud with a silver lining.

Although the Churches that entered the union did not consider the saving of money as a primary motive, at the same time they realized that they had no commission to continue spending the Lord's money and wasting the Lord's men in unnecessary duplication. They believed that millions of dollars

which unseemly rivalry would consume might be used more economically and with increased spiritual results if union were consummated. This point of view especially commended itself to men of large business vision, and justified itself to men of simple common sense, who did not approve of perpetuating barriers between evangelical Churches which were preaching the same gospel. This they deemed to be an improvidence amounting in practice to a sin. A shrewd farmer declared a principle of homely wisdom when he said that "the differences between denominations were not worth paying for."

One more motive, which became important before the consummation of the union was complete, must not be overlooked. In all honesty it was felt that the contracting Churches must, though the progress of union was beset with difficulties, keep faith with the people. Thousands of local union congregations were composed of persons who, through the long period of negotiations, had temporarily surrendered their former denominational affiliations, with the expectancy and the promise that they would be restored to fellowship with their previous co-religionists when union was complete.

The motives mentioned in this chapter combined to produce an unshakeable conviction, that Church Union in Canada was

according to the will of God, and should be consummated with as little delay as possible. By these motives the unionists were carried beyond regarding denominational divisions as merely unfortunate or inexpedient. To them they appeared to be not only quite unnecessary, but even demonstrably wrong in principle, if not sinful in practice. They accepted their bounden duty as a high and holy sacramental task, to be carried forward at each step with prayerful deliberation and high endeavour. They hoped, and the hope is being remarkably realized, to gather into one Church the spiritual values of the history and traditions of the three uniting Churches, and of as many more as kindly time and Providence might add to their number. All their motives were included in a desire to make a contribution toward superseding the fractional representations of Christianity, which had divided the Body of Christ for centuries, by an organization which, by its confessed unity and openness of mind, might reveal in somewhat larger measure the great spiritual realities inherent in the message of Jesus, as yet but dimly comprehended by His Church.

Let it not be supposed that the unionists anticipated that the new Church would be a dormitory furnished with flowery beds of ease. They expected that it would be what it has become—a workshop of immense proportions

and of unmeasured tasks. They knew that a new departure, which contemplated the establishment of the first principles and practices of ideal Christianity, would require a striking spiritual evolution. Many of its demands were as yet hidden from their view, but they perceived that it would demand a type of spiritual culture, and an expansion of personal and intellectual sympathy, such as the Church of Christ has not known for centuries, and in some aspects of it, such as the world has never seen; and that the spirit of a great renunciation must possess The United Church if it fulfil the high purpose of God.

Every advance of the religion of Christ is saturated with sacrifice. Sacrifice is the life blood of the Kingdom of God; and it is certainly not easier for a Church than for an individual to pass through the needle's eye. The will of Providence is often discerned by the very hindrances which accompany it. The ease of the march is never a proof that the army is on the right route. In the race which heaven sets before the spiritual adventurer only great hearts win through. The difficulties which at times beset union were accepted as only a divine challenge to greater personal consecration toward the realization of The United Church of Canada.

In the process of realizing union another

motive emerged. The coming together in personal contact for negotiation, and for co-operative activities of representatives of the three Churches, deepened the sense of fellowship until they learned to love each other fervently, and felt more keenly the trifling irrelevancy of the impediments which had been fencing them apart. They felt increasingly the presence and strength of that Christian love whose natural effect, if it be not impeded, is always to integrate unity—a unity which dissipates the sense of incompatibility and implements organic union. Their experience became an unequivocal demonstration that ecclesiastical divisions do not beget or spring from love; and that separations between the children of our common Father, which are not founded upon essential disagreements concerning the gospel of salvation, cannot be justified before the bar of God.

The true unionist, however, while feeling for himself the inspiration of the motives of spiritual conviction, economic propriety and advantage, and patriotic loyalty, the motives to which reference has already been made, is not without sympathy with persons who voted against union for reasons of a more private and personal nature.

One of the tragedies of denominationalism is, that many people, similar in their private

religious motives and equally sincere, looking through denominational spectacles, fail to understand each other, and reach convictions which are unfounded in fact and sometimes grotesque in expression.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT

1902-1904

THE history of this great movement may be most clearly presented by having regard to the chronological sequence of its various features and events.

The earliest feature was concerned with the mental attitudes of the three Churches proposing to explore the possibility of organic union.

The first important event, definitely related to the movement as such, was the fraternal visit of a deputation representing the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada to the General Conference of the Methodist Church, meeting in Winnipeg, in 1902. The deputation consisted of Principal Patrick, of Manitoba College, Winnipeg, Professor George Bryce of the same institution, and the Rev. C. W. Gordon, D.D., familiarly known in the literary world as "Ralph Connor."

Professor Bryce contented himself with the complimentary congratulations usually considered germane to such an occasion. Dr. Gordon opened the eyes of the General Conference with a marvellous revelation of the

wheat producing possibilities of the then comparatively unknown Canadian North-West. Principal Patrick, with the ardour of a great enthusiasm for Church Union, broke out into a passionate appeal for the unification of Methodists and Presbyterians in Canada. He instanced many things which the two communions held in common, and expressed his own conviction that the time had come for the organic union of the two Churches. He invited the General Conference to appoint a committee to begin negotiations with the Presbyterians with that object in view.

Principal Patrick took pains to disclaim any official right to speak on this behalf, in the name of the Presbyterian Church. But, knowing also the attitude of other great leaders of Presbyterianism toward union, such as Principal George Munro Grant and Principal William Caven, the General Conference accepted Principal Patrick's presentation as representing the sentiment of Canadian Presbyterianism.

These eminent personalities being in favour of union imparted to Methodism a degree of confidence to go forward. Methodists still have a vivid recollection of an address of prophetic power and apostolic ardour delivered by Principal Caven in Toronto, which dissolved the doubts of very conservative Methodist leaders as to the presence of God in the union

movement, and gained for it their consent. Confidence seemed perfect. Thus Methodism was challenged to reveal its mental attitude toward organic union.

That the request of Principal Patrick was not due to an ebullition of momentary enthusiasm, but truly represented the mind and spirit of the General Assembly, was made evident and confirmed by the action of that body, in 1904, when it appointed a committee on Church Union to confer with similar committees of the other Churches concerned. Thus the mental attitude of representative Presbyterianism also was made manifest.

In response to the advance made by Principal Patrick, the General Conference at the same session adopted a resolution, in substance as follows:

That the time was opportune for a definite movement concentrating attention upon and aiming at the organic union of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Congregational Churches in Canada, and the Methodist Church. It also resolved that it would regard with gratification a movement with this object in view, and would facilitate the formation of a Basis of Union, and would educate the people interested into that deeper spirit of unity and mutual concession upon which the successful consummation of such movements ultimately depends.

It commended the movement to the prayerful interest and sympathy of the Methodist

Church in the hope that, if organic union of the denominations named be achieved, it may be accompanied with great blessings to the Church and to the nation at large.

It is a matter of frequent public acknowledgment that the noble sentiments and motives expressed in that resolution were maintained by the Methodist Church from the beginning to the end of negotiation.

Having passed the above resolution, the General Conference appointed a Committee, composed of the General Superintendent (at that time the Rev. Dr. Albert Carman) with seven ministers and seven laymen, to receive communications on the subject from the Churches named; confer with committees that might be appointed by such Churches, and report to the next General Conference.

The General Council of the Congregational Churches in Canada in June, 1903, unanimously passed a resolution deciding to enter upon negotiations with the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches with union in view.

By these means the mental attitude of the three Churches began to be clearly discovered with great satisfaction to all parties.

The leaders of the three denominations concerned were but imperfectly acquainted with each other at the time of this auspicious beginning, but united work quickened interest and appreciation very rapidly; so that, without any

undue specific effort to that end, the outlook for organic union very perceptibly brightened.

In those early days there was not a whisper of question or misgiving as to whether or not the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, acting in accordance with the powers constitutionally vested in it, had authority to commit the whole Presbyterian Church to the consummation of union. Not until years of negotiation had elapsed did the opinion find open expression that the Assembly lacked that power, even after it had observed the safeguards to hasty action provided in the Barrier Act.

After opposition arose in the Presbyterian Church, the other parties to the union felt that the cross currents and hesitations of debate could not be reasonably accepted by them as representing the true state of sentiment in the Presbyterian Church as such. Had the Methodist or Congregational people followed any other course, the unionists in the Presbyterian Church would have been justly aggrieved.

The Joint Committee completed the work of its first session, and passed a resolution which disclosed the mind and spirit which animated it as they approached more intimately the period of decisive negotiation. It read:

That this Joint Committee, composed of representatives of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches, assembled together

respecting an organic union of the Churches named, would reverently and gratefully acknowledge the token of the Master's presence as evidenced by the cordial, brotherly spirit, and earnest desire for Divine guidance maintained throughout the entire session.

While recognizing the limitations of our authority as to any action that would commit our respective Churches in regard to a proposal that is yet in its initial stages, we feel free, nevertheless, to say that we are of one mind that organic union is both desirable and practicable; and we commend the whole subject to the sympathetic and favourable consideration of the chief assemblies of the Churches concerned for such further action as they may deem wise and expedient.

Thus ended the period of discussion which clarified the mental attitude to union of the parties thereto.

Through this early sentimental phase of the negotiations the proposal to unite came forward swimmingly. Every member of the Joint Committee seemed to be enthusiastically in favour of it, and with willing mind declared that they perceived no insuperable obstacle in the way of its happy consummation. In those early days of sweet communion the spirit of John Wesley found a many voiced expression and a rich fulfilment when, in a vein of pure Christianity, he exclaimed, "Is thy heart right with my heart, as mine is with thine? If so, give me thy hand." Paraphrased, this meant, "If we love and pray and work for the same

things, let us love and pray and work together." All parties seemed to feel that they could trust the future, under Divine guidance, to reconcile any differences of opinion that might arise, and to dispel all unwarranted prejudices by the solvent of brotherly love.

The possibilities of misunderstanding and mistrust, inherent in ecclesiastically bent human nature, were not even glimpsed, much less were they realized.

In this early, sentimental period of approach to the subject, in reporting progress to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church the statement was made, "that it was universally recognized in the Joint Committee that a question so important and far reaching in its results was not one to be unduly hurried; that a union of the Churches, to be real and lasting, must carry the consent of the entire membership; and that no final step could be taken until ample opportunity had been given to consider the whole question in the courts of the various Churches, and by the people generally."

There is no doubt that "ample opportunity" was given to consider the whole question during the twenty-one years of negotiation; but the idea that a pledge was made, that it should carry the consent of the entire membership, is more open to question. This expression of opinion appears to have been born of an exhila-

rant enthusiasm which had no vision of future difficulties; no conception of the effect which a campaign of persistent opposition might have, should such a thing ever take place; and with no thought of an almost universal fact, that it is impossible to guarantee the unanimous consent of hundreds of thousands of people to any human proposal, however excellent it might be. On the face of it the idea is Utopian. The imposition of such a condition would make advance impossible in any civilized state.

Had any reasonable body of men voted upon that condition as a clear and distinct issue, it would no doubt have been summarily rejected.

The adoption of every step in preparation for organic union was in accordance with the most democratic principle that civilized nations have yet discovered—by the decision of a majority vote. The principle of unanimity would deadlock progress and arrest advance in all departments of free public activity.

CHAPTER III

HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT

1904-1909

THE next chronological period extended from 1904 to 1909. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in 1904, appointed a special committee to explore the possibilities of organic union. This action was interpreted to mean, that unless sufficient reasons were found for perpetuating divisions, the Presbyterian Church would face the duty of uniting with the other Churches already considering the same subject.

At the first conference of the Joint Committee, it was divided into subsections, charged respectively with considering the following aspects of ecclesiastical life—Doctrine, Polity, the Ministry, Administration and Law.

The meticulous care with which the process of forming a Basis of Union was approached, and the deliberation with which the work was carried forward, are manifest in the arrangements made for the perfect scrutiny of every advance. The duty was undertaken by men who worked as immediately under the eye of the Unseen and as laying foundations for many

generations. The proposals of the sub-committees were thoroughly canvassed by the denominational sections of the Joint Committee meeting separately; and considered again, in the light of any suggestions offered by the denominational sections, by the Joint Committee as a whole. As thus amended, the decisions were published each year for the information of the negotiating Churches, along with the report of the proceedings of the Joint Committee. Everything was done in the clear light of a day of perfect trust.

This process continued at stated periods extending over five years. In addition to the process as just set forth, all suggestions which were sent forward from time to time, either by individuals or Church courts, received careful consideration.

It was during this period (in 1906), that "a friendly letter was sent to the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England in Canada, and to the Chairmen or Presidents of the various Baptist Conventions, explaining the action already taken by the Joint Union Committee, and extending to the authorities of the Churches named a cordial invitation to send delegates to participate in their discussions, should they consider it advisable to do so." Courteous replies to these communications were received, but no acceptances.

The Anglican reply was, in effect, that if the

negotiating Churches would accept the Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1888 (which involves the dogma of apostolic succession, and possession of the same as necessary to a valid ordination) as a condition precedent to entering into negotiation, they would be prepared to begin.

The implication of the reply seemed to be, that ministers of the Free Churches must accept an inferior position as ministers before joint discussion would be in order.

The very genius of the Joint Committee was that it was formed upon the principle of equality in rank and privilege. It was therefore inequitable to propose that one party to the great issue should make a contribution labelled infallible, and that the contributions of the others should be subject to debate and amendment. In such a conference the principle of democracy requires, that every portion of it should be subjected to the crucible of debate, and only that preserved which would be of constructive worth as material for building the Kingdom of God.

In this connection it would not be amiss to state the well grounded and assured faith of the non-conformist Churches which did enter into union.

They believed that apostolic succession does not depend upon any tactual enduement through any human being. They believed no more in the divine right of bishops as special

depositaries of the grace of God than in the divine right of kings or emperors as special depositaries of governmental authority. They believed in no spiritual lordship except that of our Divine Lord. They believed in the providence of God working through the history and development of the Church. They believed that the general principles only of the constitution of the Church were subjects of revelation. They believed that what the Church determined to be a providential form of government at one period of its history, it might decide not to be providential at a later date, and under changed conditions. They were under no temptation to repudiate the spiritual significance of their Church history. They believed in the communion of *all* saints, and were ready to unite with all Christians at any table where the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was sincerely administered in the spirit of its Founder. They believed in the priesthood of all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. But while so convinced, they were willing to submit their faith to the test of unfettered debate.

Notwithstanding the unpromising Anglican reply, the official record of the proceedings of the Joint Committee contains the following: "In view of the cordial and brotherly replies sent by the representatives of the Church of England, a special committee was appointed

to confer with any delegation that might be appointed by that Church." So far we have not heard of any such appointment being made, and, in the spirit of Christian unity, we can only wait in hope that the coming Lambeth Council may, in its good judgment, open wider the door for that reunion of Christendom which is so ardently desired by a large portion of the Anglican Communion.

The reply of the Baptists to the advance of the Joint Committee in their direction was, that they had a conviction that they were commissioned to preach a special gospel throughout the world, and they were persuaded they must retain a separate organization to accomplish that task. The utterance of the word "conviction" stopped all progress in negotiation. The Churches already contemplating union were not out to tempt any party to the issue to deny or obscure an essential conviction, but to discover whether they could construct a theological platform upon which all participating might stand in good faith without the sacrifice of any truth considered essential.

The writer has always regretted that the Baptists did not enter upon the discussion of a Basis of Union, while reserving to themselves the right of the other Churches, to withdraw from the enterprise at any point where they found their conscientious convictions were

cramped. It is quite conceivable that Christian fellowship and mutual agreement might have been harmoniously arranged.

The consequence of these refusals was that the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational bodies were compelled to go forward without the company and assistance of their Anglican and Baptist brethren in Christ.

It was in the latter part of the year 1908, after more than four years of negotiating, characterized by the spirit of utmost brotherliness, in an atmosphere in which it was not difficult to "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," that the Basis of Union was ready for presentation to the respective Church courts.

On December 11 of that year a resolution, proposed by Principal Daniel Miner Gordon of Queen's University, Kingston, and seconded by Judge Leet of Montreal, was adopted as follows:

This Joint Committee on Church Union, representing the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches, in closing their fifth conference, desire to acknowledge with humble gratitude the goodness of God manifested in all their meetings.

In the brotherly spirit of their deliberations, in the harmony of their decisions, in the solution of many difficulties presented to them, they recognize the guidance of the Divine Spirit, and they submit the results of their conference to the Churches represented by them.

They believe that the conclusions to which they have been led in regard to the important interests considered by them show that the organic union of the negotiating Churches is practicable. They assume that ample opportunity will be given, not only to the courts, but also to the general membership of the various Churches, to consider the results of their conferences, and they expect that the more fully these are considered the more generally will they be approved.

The Joint Committee would be glad to welcome to their conference representatives of other Christian communions, and, although this widening of the conference has not yet been found practicable, they hope that, in the event of a union of the negotiating Churches, a still more comprehensive union may in the future be realized.

The Joint Committee regard their work as now substantially completed. They commit it to the Great Head of the Church for His blessing, and to those portions of His Church which they represent with confident hope of their approval.

"Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants and Thy glory unto their children. Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it."

CHAPTER IV

HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT

1909-1921

UPON the reception of the report of the committee on Church Union, including the Basis of Union, as adopted by the Joint Committee, in 1908, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church resolved as follows:

The Assembly receives the report, and learns with deep gratification that the Joint Committee on Union has, after five years' enquiry and discussion, arrived at the conclusion that in their judgment the organic union of the three negotiating Churches is practicable.

Inasmuch as the Joint Committee have expressed their conviction that the voting on the question of union should take place simultaneously in the three negotiating Churches, and inasmuch as the General Conference of the Methodist Church will not meet till the month of September, 1910, the Assembly agrees that the judgment of the Church at large on this important subject be not sought until after that date. They direct, however, that copies of the report be sent down to Presbyteries, Sessions and Congregations for their use, in order that they may be fully informed as to the whole question, and be prepared to deal with it when it comes before them for disposal.

There is not in this action of the venerable,

the General Assembly, the slightest hint of the alleged desire to "blot out forever the Presbyterian Church in Canada, or to drive Presbyterians from their Church," but every possible effort was made to preserve it and hold them together. This is evident in the careful and hesitant, though resolute, steps of the General Assembly toward the ultimate goal, and in the patience of the Methodist and Congregational people.

In 1910 the General Assembly adopted the following resolution:

The Assembly declare their approval of the documents agreed upon by the Joint Committee as a Basis upon which this Church may unite with the Methodist and Congregational Churches, and they direct that this resolution, along with the above mentioned documents, be transmitted to Presbyteries for their judgment under the Barrier Act, not later than the first day of May, 1911. The Assembly are of the opinion that in the event of the returns from Presbyteries warranting further steps being taken in the direction of union, the General Assembly of 1911 will proceed to consult sessions and congregations regarding the whole matter.

This action of the Assembly reveals its meticulous care and deliberation in approaching this most important question, and does not show the least attempt "to take away the liberty, the rights and the life of the Presbyterian Church in Canada."

The report of the vote by Presbyteries to the

General Assembly of 1911 was, that of the seventy Presbyteries of the Church, sixty-seven voted. Of these, fifty voted to approve.

In 1911, the General Assembly having found that the Basis of Union was approved under the Barrier Act by a majority of the Presbyteries, sent down the whole question to the sessions and congregations for their judgment. The matter was presented to them in the form of two questions. In answer to the first question, "Are you in favour of organic union with the Methodist and Congregational Churches?" 6,245 elders voted affirmatively, and 2,475 in the negative. Of communicants, 106,755 voted for, and 48,278 against. Of the adherents, 37,175 voted for, and 14,174 against.

In answer to the second question, "Do you approve of the proposed Basis of Union?" 5,104 elders voted for, and 2,192 against; 77,993 communicants voted for, and 27,197 against; while 27,756 adherents voted for, and 10,316 against.

It is very clear from these returns that the ballots of every class of voters showed a decided majority; not only in favour of organic union, but also for that union on the Basis presented. This vote, taking place before the organization of an opposition with all its machinery for dissuading officials and people from favouring union, more nearly represented

the unbiased feeling and opinion of the Presbyterian Church in Canada as a whole than any later election could do. The electorate had not then been challenged and confused by numerous misconceptions, and therefore misrepresentations, of the effect of union upon the life and liberties of the Church.

The feeling of the General Conference of the Methodist Church during these years was expressed in a resolution passed in 1910. It declared its "approval of the documents agreed upon by the Joint Committee as a Basis of Union upon which the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches may unite." It further directed the General Conference Special Committee (or Executive) to send the documents "to the District Meetings for consideration, and to the Annual Conferences for consideration and adoption or rejection," and that "if the reports from the Annual Conferences warrant such action to send the documents of the Basis of Union to the Official Boards and to the membership of the Church for consideration and adoption or rejection." It also gave authority to the General Conference Special Committee, if the result of the vote would warrant the action, to call a special meeting of the General Conference, further to consider the matter of consummating the proposed union.

The result of the Methodist voting was that

11 Conferences voted approval and 1 non-approval. The vote by members of the Conferences was 1,579 for, and 270 against.

The General Conference Special Committee thereupon directed, that the whole question be referred to the Official Boards and membership of the Church. Of 29,280 officials voting, 23,475 voted for, and 3,869 against; and of 293,967 members of 18 years of age and over 150,841 voted for, and 24,357 against; and of 29,373 members under 18 years of age, 17,198 voted for, and 2,615 against. Of adherents, 42,115 voted for, and 7,234 against.

The Congregational Union, in 1909, after reciting the steps already taken, and referring to various subjects contained in the Basis, adopted the following statement:

The Congregational Union at its Annual Meeting, in 1904, decided "that organic union is both desirable and practicable." It now remains to decide whether organic union on the *Basis prepared* by the Joint Committee is desirable and practicable. As this must be determined in the Congregational way by the vote of the Churches, your Committee would recommend that the documents agreed upon by the Joint Committee, along with this report, be sent to the Churches for consideration.

Of 10,689 members of the Congregational Churches, 2,993 voted for, and 813 against the Basis.

Subsequently to the taking of this vote, the

Congregational Union resolved, "that this Union considers the action it has already taken as sufficient, and will now wait until the other negotiating bodies have had an opportunity of testing to a corresponding degree the feeling of their constituencies." (*Year Book*, 1910-1911, page 31.)

The General Conference Special Committee of the Methodist Church declared itself "satisfied, that the Methodist Church is now prepared to proceed toward the union heretofore agreed upon." (*Minutes of General Conference*, July 16, 17, 1912.)

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church resolved as follows:

In view of the extent of the minority which is not yet convinced that organic union is the best method of expressing the unity sincerely desired by all, the Assembly deem it unwise immediately to proceed to consummate the union, but believes that by further conference and discussion practically unanimous action can be secured within a reasonable time.

It also resolved, that all suggestions "be referred to the Union Committee for their consideration, in the hope of removing objections, and with a view to further conferences with the Committees of the other negotiating Churches." (*Minutes of the General Assembly*, 1912, pages 45, 46.)

In 1913 the General Assembly resolved, that,

for the fullest and fairest consideration of every aspect of the question, further amendments to the present Basis of Union and alternative proposals be invited, and referred to the Union Committee, in order that after considering them it may again enter into conference with the Committees of the other negotiating Churches, with the view of setting before our people a final presentation of the question for their judgment. (Appendices to *Minutes*, page 302.)

In 1914 the Assembly invited the Methodist and Congregational Churches to meet in joint session with its own Union Committee, in order to consider an amended Basis, and to prepare a Basis which might be submitted to the Assembly of 1915. (*Minutes*, 1914, page 41.)

Meanwhile the Congregational Union had re-appointed its Union Committee year by year. Although there was some reluctance on the part of Methodists to continue further negotiations until the Presbyterian Church was ready immediately to consummate union, the General Conference, in response to the invitation from the Assembly, reappointed its Union Committee.

The reluctance on the part of some Methodists to continue negotiations at that time did not arise from any lack of interest in or desire for Church Union, but they realized that, owing to continued uncertainty, the progress

of all the Churches was hindered in many directions. They were anxious to put an end to a somewhat paralyzing uncertainty, and on that account they preferred to bring the question to a speedy issue. However, patient counsels prevailed, a new Union Committee was appointed, and, on December 16 and 17, the Joint Committee as reconstituted met to discuss: "(1) The proposed changes suggested by the General Assembly; (2) Changes suggested by the denominational Committees on Church Union; (3) The name to be given to The United Church, and the names to be given to the courts and officials of The United Church; (4) The legal aspects of the whole question of Church Union; (5) Other matters preparatory to the final recommendation regarding Church Union, to be presented once more to the proper courts of the negotiating Churches." The conclusions reached in that meeting were embodied in the amended Basis of Union.

In 1915, by a vote of 368 to 74, the Assembly decided to submit the whole question of union again to presbyteries, sessions, members and adherents of the Church. The form of the question was: "Are you in favour of union with the Methodist and Congregational Churches of Canada on the Basis approved by the General Assembly of 1915?" At the same time, that there might be a clear and final understanding, the people were reminded, that "the decision

on the question must be reached on the basis of the votes cast."

At the Assembly of 1916, in Winnipeg, the results of this vote showed, that out of 69 valid returns (including 3 ties), 53 Presbyteries favoured union. After a very long and heated debate the General Assembly, by a vote of 406 for and 90 against, passed the following resolution:

1. That in accordance with its recommendations this General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, do now resolve to unite with the Methodist Church of Canada, and the Congregational Churches of Canada, to constitute "The United Church of Canada," on the Basis of Union, approved by the General Assembly of 1915, and by the majority of Presbyteries since consulted under the Barrier Act.

2. That a Committee be appointed to carry out the policy of the Assembly, and to act in co-operation with Communities of the Methodist and Congregational Churches of Canada, in obtaining the necessary legal advice and in taking such steps as may be deemed proper to prepare for making application to the Dominion and Provincial Legislatures for such legislation as may be necessary to secure the conveyance of property to The United Church.

That this Committee report to the first Assembly following the end of the first year after the close of the War, and that, with the consent and authority of that Assembly, application be made for the legislation proposed at the following Session of the Dominion Parliament and the Provincial Legislatures.

3. That provision be made in this legislation to conserve the property rights of all congregations that may determine by a majority vote of the communicants, not to enter The United Church.

4. That the union be consummated as soon after the securing of legislation as the regular steps can be taken.

In 1917, at Montreal, the Assembly again considered the question of Union, and passed the following resolution:

1. That the Assembly express its sincere sympathy with the desire conveyed in many of the Overtures to avoid disunion among the membership of our own Church, and to this end urgently urge upon our people that debate and organized propagandism on either side be discontinued in the meantime, and that a spirit of prayer be cultivated.

2. That inasmuch as the resolution of the last Assembly sets forth that further action will not be taken until the second Assembly after the close of the War, to secure peace in the meantime, the Assembly urges that controversy on the matter of Organic Union be dropped by all parties; that no attempt be made at the present time to set forth in detail the action appropriate to a future period, but that the Church patiently await the new light which it may receive by Divine guidance through the growing experience of the people, and the lessons of the War.

The period of delay, provided for in the resolutions of 1916 and 1917, having passed, the question of union was again considered in St. James Square Presbyterian Church,

Toronto, in June, 1921, when the following decision was reached:

1. That whereas the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada has already by a large majority expressed itself in favour of Organic Union with the Methodist and Congregational Churches of Canada—

That whereas two appeals to the members and adherents of the Presbyterian Church in Canada have resulted in a similar way—

That whereas, during the time when by general agreement the matter of Union was not discussed, nothing has occurred to change the mind of the Church, but rather to confirm and strengthen its previous decision—

Therefore, be it resolved that this General Assembly take such steps as may be deemed best to consummate Organic Union with the above-named Churches as *expeditiously as possible*.

2. That a representative committee be appointed, with instructions to confer with the negotiating Churches, and to carry out the policy of this Assembly, and to report to the next General Assembly.

3. That in order to facilitate a larger measure of Christian unity the Assembly declares that Presbyterians, who for the sake of Christian unity, unite with Union Affiliated congregations, organized on the plan authorized by the General Assembly, may justly consider themselves in vital fellowship and communion with the Presbyterian Church in Canada, even if for purposes of discipline and order they may be under a Methodist Conference or Congregational Union, and that the other negotiating Churches be invited to take similar action.

4. That the Assembly instruct its Boards, Committees, Courts and Congregations to carry out the largest possible measure of co-operation with similar bodies of the other negotiating Churches, particularly in the education of candidates for the ministry, Church Publications, Mission and Social Service Work.

From 1921 to 1925 nothing occurred which materially changed the attitude or relation of the respective parties to each other or to the movement.

The die appeared to be cast.

During this period the unionists, through a Committee on Law and Legislation, prepared a Bill for presentation to the Parliament of Canada, uniting the three Churches named and bestowing upon them corporate powers as The United Church of Canada.

The framers of the Bill proceeded, as they believed, in the spirit of equity. Naturally there was division of feeling as to its justice. But with some changes the Bill received the assent of the Senate and House of Commons of the Dominion and became one of the Statutes of Canada. See Appendix A.

During the same period the opponents of union as strongly as possible developed an organized opposition called the Presbyterian Church Association.

During the long period of negotiations, spurred to action by the slowness of advance

toward the consummation of union, and moved by a determination so far as they were concerned to prevent any miscarriage of the union project in the prairie portion of Canada, there came into being an organization called the Council of the Local Union Churches. The long delay created very acute unrest in the minds of many practical members of the Mother Churches in the West.

The relation of this Council to the Churches from which it derived its resources was friendly, though determined. At its request a committee entitled The Advisory Committee of the Local Union Church Council was appointed, consisting of representatives of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches and of the Local Union Church Council. The writer represented the Methodist Church on the committee, and he has a very impressive recollection of a warm debate upon the question of secession and the establishment of a new denomination in the West.

But in the end patience outlasted impatience and prevailed. In 1921 the Council was invited to send representatives to the Joint Church Union Committee that they might understand more perfectly the considerations which prevented greater haste in the union movement.

In the event the Council remained in loyal association with the larger movement until the end of the struggle, and had parity of

representation at the final consummation of union in Toronto in June, 1925.

The reader may charge the writer with prolixity and undue explicitness in threading his way along the devious pathway of progress and delay as this union moved towards its appointed goal. In explanation he would say, that he has been controlled by a desire to show that there was no undue haste in reaching the consummation of union; that all parties having any interest in the result were afforded every possible opportunity of self expression; that patience, prompted by profound sympathy, was exercised toward all non-concurrents; and that each step in the whole process was in perfect conformity with the principles of equality and democracy.

Through all the tract of years over which the negotiations extended, there is no evidence of a desire to assume lordship over the people, or to exert in any form a dominating spirit. The people were fully and freely consulted at every step.

If a spirit of domination were a driving force in the counsels of unionism, the attempt at union would have ended early and in disastrous failure. The actuating motives from beginning to end are truly set forth in the chapter devoted to that aspect of the movement.

CHAPTER V

CO-OPERATION

ORGANIC union in Canada was preceded by, and, to a large extent, grew out of a system of co-operation. In some respects co-operation was in practice years before the ideal of organic union took practical form. By it the Churches, which afterwards united, built towards amalgamation better than they knew. The leading of Providence in that direction was put into practice first in connection with the Department of Home Missions, and was afterward extended step by step to include Social Service, Religious Education, Theological Education, the publication of Sunday School periodicals, and unification in part of the work amongst foreign speaking New Canadians. These activities not only kept the ideal of union before the Churches, but they were of special advantage in permitting the coalescence of departmental activities when union took place, with little debate and with no loss of effective working power.

Co-operation began, in 1899, under an agreement between the Presbyterian and Methodist Home Mission authorities, not to send an additional missionary into any locality where either Church was already carrying on its work.

This was followed by a decision to withdraw one missionary from fields where representatives of the two denominations mentioned already occupied the same territory.

The Joint Committee on Co-operation in Home Mission work, duly constituted under the authority of the supreme courts of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches in the year 1911, carefully considered the whole situation in the interests of the Kingdom of God in Canada, and decided that the principles of co-operation be applied:

1. In the adjustment of overlapping in existing fields.

2. In the arranging of religious work in absolutely new districts.

3. In the work to be done amongst people of foreign nationalities.

They approached both the Anglican and Baptist Churches in the interest of co-operation, but, for various reasons, found complete joint action impracticable.

The writer was for six years the Chairman of a Joint Committee on Co-operation in Home Mission work in the Province of Alberta. He was assured, that during this period duplication was eliminated within the Province except in fifteen charges, where it was stated that the population was so numerous that duplication did not involve competition.

A description of the method followed in

Alberta will set forth in a general way the procedure adopted in the other Provinces of the Dominion.

The work of rearrangement of mission fields, so as to produce the best result possible with the least expenditure of men and money, was entrusted to a Joint Committee composed of the Annual Conference Missionary Committee of the Methodist Church acting jointly with the Synod's Committee on Home Missions and Social Service of the Presbyterian Church. This Joint Committee was called "The Provincial Committee on Co-operation of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches of the Province of Alberta." By this committee the whole Province was divided into districts. A committee was appointed for each district, with authority to consider the work within their respective bounds, and to make recommendations as to proposed changes in each district. These District Committees reported annually to the Provincial Committee, which, according to authority conferred upon it by the supreme courts of the Churches represented, rearranged the work, and reported their action to Presbyteries interested, and to the Stationing Committee of the Methodist Conference.

When deciding what changes to recommend, the District Committees heard representations of the charges affected, and gave serious attention to the following considerations: priority

of occupation of the field; the relative strength in members and adherents of the different denominations; the relative amounts contributed by the two denominations involved in support of the agencies of religion amongst themselves; and the readiness of the different denominations to minister to the field promptly and effectively.

In making such arrangements equality of denominational sacrifice for the mutual benefit was carefully considered, and observed as far as possible.

The roll of membership in each charge so constituted was composed of all the members of the negotiating Churches within the territory assigned to the charge. The charge itself had complete connexional relation to the denomination to which it was assigned, and with which it was affiliated. Representatives of Churches affiliated with Presbyterianism attended Presbyteries, and representatives of Churches assigned to Methodism had full standing in Methodist District Meetings. But connection with any co-operative congregation did not necessarily imply abandonment of denominational preferences and affiliations.

These arrangements, as union approached, were regarded as temporary, and were declared to be "pending" organic union.

A notable step in co-operation was taken when the Co-operating Committee of Alberta

agreed that, so far as sparsely settled or as yet unoccupied territory was concerned, Presbyterianism should confine itself to work contiguous to the lines of the Canadian Pacific Railway, while the Methodist Church would minister to the people settling upon the lines of railway now included in the Canadian National Railways system.

The demand for a more intensive service than was being rendered by the denominations acting separately was clearly illustrated by little incidents which came to light after the preaching of a broadcasted sermon in McDougall Church, Edmonton. A gentleman wrote the *Edmonton Journal* informing the editor that his mother-in-law, eighty-seven years of age, had through the radio service heard a minister preach for the first time in twenty years. A lady also wrote the pastor of the Church, saying: "The opponents of union ought to be ashamed of themselves. Many of them know nothing but sitting in a palatial church and listening to the best of everything. If they had a taste of what we have had for six years, no service at all, probably they might think less selfishly."

A strong public opinion also demanded the rectification of ecclesiastical lines, and welcomed co-operation as a step in the right direction. Leaders in many localities argued, that the people of the Prairie Provinces were

virtually undivided in their community life in everything but religion. They were unified educationally under a public school system; commercially under co-operative business arrangements; in government under the prevailing political system; and they had no gaping chasms between social classes. Very pointedly, then, they asked why religion should prove the only divisive exception in their community life.

It was no wonder that common sense democratic people reacted against the idea of having the population of small communities divided into three or four competing congregations while listening to essentially the same gospel. They would not away with the idea.

Even new-comers to the country caught the same impression. It is said that a Doukhobor, standing in the midst of the public square of a prairie town, and seeing four churches on the corners of the same, asked concerning each one of them in succession, "Is that a Jesus church?" and being assured that it was, put to his informant a further question, "Why four?" Who can answer his penetrating question, unionists or dis-unionists? It is apparent to common sense, and especially to Christian sense, that no answer can be given to such a question which would not be a reflection upon the type of organized religion then, and to a large extent still, represented in Canada and other lands.

The conditions referred to challenged the intelligence of most people, and gave impetus to the establishment of Local Union congregations; while the ease and satisfaction with which they came together bore witness to the dwindling of denominational prejudices.

In course of time it became very apparent, that if organic union were not the goal of co-operation a multitude of communities would take the matter into their own hands. Throughout the West there would have been scores of independent union congregations, which must either unite to form a new denomination, or else stagnate and wither spiritually for lack of fellowship and unselfish participation in national and missionary effort for the nation and the world.

It is to be mentioned to the great credit of the connexional officers of the Churches involved, that they did not stand in the way of these local amalgamations, though they might mean loss to denominational funds and jeopardize the continuance of their offices. The comity of the general officers whose administration was involved in these mutual arrangements was perfect. While they looked upon "their own things" in absolute fidelity, they also looked upon the things of others in loyalty to the Kingdom of God as a whole rather than any fractional representation of it. Evidently they were not in the co-operation

movement for denominational profit, but to make a contribution to the highest welfare of the people served, and the honour of the Church of Christ.

In the successful Local Union Churches it soon became evident that the wisdom of the community was sustained and satisfied. The congregation of the local United Church usually outnumbered the total attendance of the divided congregations. The community Church soon became a more impressive factor in the life of the community than were the competing congregations. It also offered a greater variety of service to the people, and the minister was assisted by a larger band of workers. The minister himself absorbed more optimism, with the assurance that he was doing a real man's job, worthy of the full consecration of his highest powers.

The field of education for the Christian ministry afforded another opportunity of co-operation. Wherever in any centre there were two or more colleges of the denominations proposing to unite, the students of the negotiating Churches were jointly trained under the same professors. They used the same text books, heard the same lectures, and were subject to the same examination tests. They mixed in residence to some extent, and more on the athletic field. They were thus prepared for a future of associated activity.

Co-operation in college work proceeded beyond the limits of the Presbyterian, Methodists and Congregationalists. In Montreal and Vancouver the Anglicans joined in co-operative theological training. The Anglicans were somewhat hesitant about surrendering Church Architecture to members of the combined faculty belonging to other denominations. The portion of Church History pertaining to the Protestant Reformation, and the origin of the Church of England were also guarded with some jealousy. But to a remarkable degree the curriculum was taught by the same professors to the same students, irrespective of denominational lines.

The Sunday School publications of both Presbyterian and Methodist Churches were jointly prepared, but all of them circulated in the schools of both denominations.

Social Service work was also undertaken subject to joint conferences. Along the whole line, from Truro, Nova Scotia, to Vancouver, British Columbia, no competition was permitted. Redemptive Homes, Orphanages and other humanistic agencies were conducted under the principle of the greatest efficiency, with the least expenditure of effort and financial outlay.

It would not be fair, however, to all the facts to leave the impression that the happy conditions just described prevailed universally. In

some places the local attitude toward the uniting of congregations anticipated the final attitude of opponents of organic Church Union. The difficulty of some in constraining themselves not to look back longingly to their old associations, their past modes of worship, and their previous spiritual affinities, operated then as afterward in preventing some Presbyterians from cordially joining in the work of the local United Church. But, on the whole, the co-operative principle cultivated in local communities contributed to produce the spirit of unity, which at length was consummated in organic union by the supreme courts of the three Churches forming The United Church of Canada.

In addition to the amalgamation of congregations by authority conferred by their respective supreme courts of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches, another method of a more democratic character was devised for the formation of Local Union Churches. This plan provided for the satisfaction of a desire for union that may have sprung up without any stimulation from the official committees or officers of the Churches. As it was understood that the congregations desiring union owed their existence to the missionary activities of the mother Churches, they asked the approval of the duly appointed representatives of the denominations interested before proceed-

ing further. This obtained, a vote of the congregations concerned was authorized, and if union were approved by them, notice was sent to the Presbytery, District Meeting or Association by chosen representatives, and the organization was formally ratified.

By the various methods described in this chapter three thousand local Union congregations were formed prior to the complete union in June, 1925.

CHAPTER VI

THE BUILDING OF THE CREED

THE mode of procedure, and the meticulous carefulness observed in the whole process of negotiation, are described elsewhere in this book. The committees representing the three denominations exploring the possibility of organic union invariably approached their task, neither in the spirit of compulsion, nor yet of compromise. They were exercised by a lively yet devout curiosity as to the outcome of their work, and were moved by deep and sincere consecration to that great and unique task.

As mutual confidence grew with closer hallowed and prayerful association, it was transmuted into a desire in honour to prefer one another, except at the point of sacrificing convictions that might seem to be essential to any party thereto. Sacrifice of conviction was never in their thought. If, at times, the keen edge of wariness was felt, it was due, not to self seeking or desire for denominational preferment, but to certain intimate, and perhaps unsuspected psychological twists, which afterward were usually unwound by a process of friendly and rational debate.

Having worked with success for many years

under one set of ecclesiastical harness, it was but natural for conservative members of the committee to be possessed of the idea that theirs was the most serviceable set possible, and that working within it they could best advance the interests of the Kingdom of God. But when, after discussion, they felt how effectively the work of the Church could be carried forward under other proposed arrangements, with few exceptions, there was no baulkiness; and at the conclusion of each conference, not without a feeling of considerable relief and consequent satisfaction, a resolution was happily and thankfully passed expressing the opinion of the committee, that there was no insuperable obstacle in the way of organic union between the three negotiating Churches.

As theology appeared to the committee to be at the foundation, and to brace every portion of the superstructure, it was considered as of first importance, that the creed of the proposed new Church should be so stated as to satisfy the most searching demands of the intellect, quicken and transform spiritual life, edify the individual Christian, and crown with blessing every effort toward realizing the Kingdom of God amongst men. From this point of view, therefore, for the purposes of cohesion and constructive idealism, a well ordered, if brief, creed was deemed necessary.

The purpose of this chapter is not to appraise

the value or cogency of this creed in its various articles, but simply to make casual reference to the circumstances and conditions under which the Faith of The United Church was formulated.

It was accepted as axiomatic, that, while the profound truths which must be considered in this connection might overtax the comprehension of the human mind, the creed that embodied them must not be contradictory to human reason, or repugnant to the moral sense of mankind.

It was also felt, that if it were to commend itself to students of the present day, it must be scientifically constructed. Therefore, it must not first assume certain theories to be true, and afterwards squeeze the convictions of conscience and the facts of revelation into conformity with the theory.

The position assumed in the literature of the opponents of union, that there is "an unchanging word of God adapted to the unchanging need of man," could not be accepted. The supreme written revelation of God is itself progressive, and fits into the evolving need of man. The teaching of Jesus formally condemned and discarded outworn beliefs, and propounded higher and more perfect truth. "It hath been said by them of old time," said Jesus, "but I say unto you."

It is true that certain fundamental truths

concerning sin and salvation must be taken as of primary interest and of essential value, because they are required to provide for equally fundamental spiritual needs which do not change; but even these old truths must be seen in new lights, and have possible applications to the changing order of the world. "The letter killeth, the spirit giveth life" to divine revelation.

Humanity in many respects changes according to its changing environment. As a matter of history this principle of change is strikingly exemplified in the results of the Industrial Revolution. The displacement of human labour by the inventions of machinery made it imperative that the social implications of the teaching of Jesus should be restated to meet new economic conditions.

Standing then in the midst of a cosmic revolution of thought, it is now recognized that a Church which does not intelligently prepare to meet the stupendous changes taking place in the outlook of humanity is doomed to comparative futility, and possibly extinction. It has become a duty to think again with open mind, for a closed mind is not susceptible to change.

The Westminster Confession of Faith, the creed ostensibly held by the opponents of union as essential to a "continuing Presbyterian Church," if brought within the grasp of

living truth, cannot be accepted as of perpetual and unalterable obligation. The attempt to confine the mind within its limits is not consistent with Christian liberty.

Such statements as we have just related were necessarily implicit in the minds of the Christian leaders of the negotiating Churches, when called to the duty of framing a new creed, for a new Church, in a new world. Thanks be to God, The United Church of Canada embodies in its constitution the right to search for, to discover, to possess, and to disseminate all truth which may break forth from the Word of God, now or hereafter, without asking permission to do so from any secular authority.

Moreover, in approaching this creedal task, it was inevitable that the matrix, in which past convictions had been formed and developed, would haunt the background of each individual builder of the new creed. The reconciliation of Calvinism and Arminianism would naturally precipitate itself into the minds of the negotiators. How could human freedom and divine sovereignty be made to run on parallel lines, was a problem that could not be inwardly avoided, however little it might come into open discussion. No wordy conflict, however, was staged between these two great principles. Silently the Presbyterians themselves admitted, that their Calvinistic forbears had agreed with a conception of Divine Sovereignty

in terms so broad as not to leave sufficient mental room for a just appreciation of the freedom of the human will. The Methodists, on the other hand, whose forefathers were known as Arminians, as silently recognized that their theological forbears had reacted from the extreme statements of Calvinism in respect to Divine Sovereignty to such an extent that, in their resentment, they had swung the pendulum of thought too far in the opposite direction.

Completely to reconcile these two doctrines, however, was not considered incumbent upon the negotiators; since that reconciliation, if possible, was really a question of psychology rather than of theology, and moreover something which the present possibilities and adjustments of the human mind might be incapable of satisfactorily solving. At any rate it was not necessary for their immediate purposes to accomplish so difficult a task, especially since practical theology confessedly deals with facts as revealed, and is not necessarily concerned with the powers and processes of the mental machinery which apprehends the facts.

It was found also, that the denominations approaching unity of expression were prepared to accept both principles as pragmatistical entities without courting any abstract debate upon a theme so difficult.

It will be seen that Article III of the Creed

of The United Church recognizes both divine sovereignty and human freedom without attempting to reconcile them. Article III is entitled "Of the Divine Purpose," and reads as follows:

We believe that the eternal wise, holy and loving purpose of God so embraces all events, that while the freedom of man is not taken away, nor is God the author of sin, yet in His providence He makes all things work together in the fulfilment of His sovereign design, and the manifestation of His glory.

This is obviously an attempt to draw attention to two principles, one of which is believed, and the other to all human seeming is experienced, but it leaves them where apparently they must remain until the light of eternity breaks more fully upon human apprehension.

Three features, however, are embodied in the creed of The United Church of Canada. It is cohesive in its influence upon the body adopting it, and is constructively idealistic. It is experiential, and therefore scientific in its content and construction; and it disturbs conventional phrases as little as possible in expressing the truth as it is in Jesus.

Turning now to consider the picture presented to us of a composite body of theologians, representing the three negotiating Churches with their different congenital temperaments, diverse histories, and varying traditions, one

naturally wonders what lights and shades may fall upon the task, and what outcome may be anticipated from the mutual study of proverbially contentious themes, however sincere and well intentioned the students may be. In the presence of such a spectacle one recalls other Church Councils convened for theological purposes, and remembers that such gatherings were not always scenes of perfect placidity and unruffled good will. But what shall we see at this conference?

The learned Presbyterian members of the sub-committee were warranted in moving calmly forward by their own studious convictions, by the authority of Assembly, and by the assurance that much Presbyterian precedent was with them in consenting to the modification of the historic theological standards of their denomination.

The Rev. Kenneth H. Cousland, M.A. (Oxon.), B.D. (Knox), Professor in Church History in Emmanuel College, Toronto, observes:

The Presbyterian churches throughout the world already held it to be right to adapt the expression of their faith to newly accepted truth. More particularly, in 1887, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Church whose ministers and members sat on this committee, had affirmed its right constitutionally to revise its standards. Moreover, in doing so at the present time it was not committing any departure from Presbyterian examples because

the Scottish churches themselves had modified their adherence to the Westminster Confession of Faith. The Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church had passed Declaratory Acts recognizing and sanctioning liberty of judgment and diversity of opinion on certain points, and declaring in what sense alone they accepted several positions referred to in the Confession. The English Presbyterian Church drew up a new doctrinal statement setting forth in twenty-four articles the fundamental beliefs held and taught by that Church. American Presbyterians also revised their standards. Indeed, all the chief branches of the Presbyterian family exercised the right, though in different ways, to modify their own Confession or their adherence to the Westminster Confession.

Doubtless the Presbyterian members of the Committee on Doctrine had abundant authorization, in the scholarship of their own denomination, for contributing to a fresh statement of Doctrine toward which they were led by their own study of the Scriptures.

Moreover, it was well known, and a fact publicly stated by leading ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, that at the ordination and induction of ministers of that Communion they were privileged to accept the Confession with silent mental reservations. This practice was so well understood that to conform to it was not regarded as moral dishonesty or verbal deceit, whatever delicate compunctions may have been inwardly felt

about making a vow which did not explicitly carry with it their real convictions.

To defend Presbyterian ministers who joined in the formation of, or endorsed, the new creed was quite out of the question at the beginning of their work. But, if any reason could be conceived as now necessary for defence, it is readily found in the eulogy of the creed of The United Church pronounced by a member of the Joint Committee on Church Union, who afterward became a decidedly antagonistic, if not a virulent opponent of the whole movement. This gentleman appears to have been so carried away by the balmy and congenial atmosphere of the Joint Committee, and to have been so pleased with the perfection of its creedal statement, that, in making a declaration of its good qualities, he declared:

Its excellence must impress every thoughtful reader. It is full, simple, and Scriptural. There are few Presbyterians who can find any substantial difference between it and the Shorter Catechism, or the Confession of Faith. Methodists and Congregationalists will doubtless find it in equally substantial accord with their accepted beliefs. Even if organic union should be delayed the work of these Committees has not been in vain. Their statement will be of permanent value to the Christian world. It will be a standing testimony to the essential unity of the Protestant Evangelical Church, both in this and in other lands, and be of value in helping to set before the world the substance of the Protestant Christian faith. It may

also serve as a standard or model to other Churches contemplating union.

This gracious, discriminating, and (with all modesty we may say) truthful tribute to the excellency of the Statement of Doctrine adopted by The United Church, seems to have the ring of absolute conviction and of deep sincerity. These qualities are so convincing that his testimony must be accepted as given in good faith, and if it stood alone it would be a great honour to the gentleman who made it. But unfortunately we must confess to a sense of deep disappointment when he publicly retracted all its admirable sentiments, and launched a vigorous attack upon the document he had so warmly endorsed.

In this predicament one wonders how it can be that a staunch believer in the final perseverance of the saints should, when he came to himself, find his lot cast in the company of backsliders, and to have become apparently unable to find rest or comfort for the soles of his theological feet except upon the bedrock of the Westminster Confession of Faith. We follow with sorrow his downward steps as he declares The United Church to be "a creedless Church." Looking into the face of the twenty articles of the creed, with which he must have made himself somewhat familiar to have eulogized them so highly, he contradicts all his favourable

comments, and only recalls the Creed to say that it stands for no definite doctrine, and that the Basis of Union "provides an open door for every error, especially the error which takes from Christ his crown of Deity, and from sinners a Saviour, making Him only a man. It would mean the death of a living evangelical Church; desolation, and barrenness of spiritual results." Surely, in making such animadversions, he must at least be absolved from having read Article VII of the Statement of Doctrine of The United Church of Canada.

This Article reads as follows:

We believe in and confess the Lord Jesus Christ, the only mediator between God and man, who being the eternal Son of God, for us men and for our salvation became truly man, being conceived of the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary, yet without sin. Unto us He has revealed the Father by His word and spirit, making known the perfect will of God. For our redemption He fulfilled all righteousness, offered Himself a perfect sacrifice on the cross, satisfied Divine justice, and made propitiation for the sins of the whole world. He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, where He ever intercedes for us. In the hearts of believers He abides as the ever-living Christ, above us and over us all He *rules*. Wherefore unto Him we render love, obedience, and adoration, as our Prophet, Priest and King.

This Article certainly provides no "open door for error," and above all does not "take from Christ His crown of Deity, and from sinners a Saviour, making Him only a man."

One hesitates to linger on the puzzle presented by such a revelation. Better dismiss it, perhaps, as an outburst of *ex parte* passion inspired by unreasonable prejudice. Even John Wesley, though usually well balanced in his ultimate judgments, attributed some of his ecclesiastical vagaries to the "violent prejudices of his early education."

Presbyterian members of the Committee on Doctrine had further abundant endorsement of their course, in departing from the Westminster Confession of Faith, given them by another prominent opponent of union, holding an influential educational position, in a sermon of very marked perspicuity. Preaching prior to the heat of the Church Union controversy, he expressed his convictions in the following fashion. Referring to the conscientious scruples and heartaches of many intellectual candidates for ordination in the former Presbyterian Church in Canada, he said:

It is a great misfortune that the finest type of young man can only enter our ministry at the risk of injury to his moral character. . . . What our Church supremely needs is a clear, definite statement of our faith in God as the Father of all mankind, who wills that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. . . . The Westminster Confession of Faith finds a place in very few of our homes; and when it does it is relegated to the distant shelf of the library.

Ministers do not study it, Church members do not read it, the public is ignorant of its contents. . . . If circumstances arose among ourselves to give it publicity, we should hasten to repudiate several of its teachings. . . . The wise course, I think, would be this—to put the Westminster Confession reverently upon the shelf as one of the historic battles of the Reformed Church, and to prepare in modern language and in terms of modern thought a brief, simple, comprehensive statement of what we most surely believe. . . . The world has made great progress since the days of Calvin in scientific attainment and religious experience, and it is sheer idolatry for us to pin our faith to his system as the final one in theology. . . .

These quotations, it must be agreed, form one of the strongest pleas ever made to abandon the Westminster Confession of Faith, and to do just what The United Church has done. It is no wonder that the Committee on Doctrine, sharing such convictions as his, proceeded with zest and conviction to “lay the Confession on the shelf,” and “prepare in modern language and in terms of more modern thought a brief, simple comprehensive statement of what was most surely believed among them.”

A great difficulty presents itself when one seeks to understand how a gentleman, holding such views, could become a leader in a denomination ostensibly holding a form of faith from which he so roundly dissented. Here again one does not care to penetrate into the realm of motive, but is surely warranted in saying

that whatever reasons urged the formation of the non-concurring Presbyterian Church, it could not have been belief in, or love for, the Westminster Confession, upon which that body professes to be founded.

History, however, will record that in applying for a writ of injunction from the Supreme Court of Ontario, to prevent the General Assembly's Church Union Committee from proceeding further with the business of union, its opponents declared, that the unionists had forfeited all right to be called Presbyterians, and to the use of the property of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, because these advantages must remain with those who believed that God had eternally predestinated a fixed number to eternal life, and others God had decreed to eternal death; and who, in their statement of claim for the injunction from the Supreme Court of Ontario, set forth as heretical the truth contained in the Basis of Union, that "God in the gospel freely offers His all-sufficient salvation to all men." They also sought further to sustain their claim by quoting from the Confession as the true doctrine of Presbyterianism, that "Christ died only for those who shall be saved"; and that "By the decree of God for the manifestation of His glory some men and angels are predestined to everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death."

No wonder wiser counsels in the end prevailed, and the application for a writ of injunction was not proceeded with. There can be little doubt that the exposure of the pleas upon which the application was based would have alienated public sympathy, and aroused widespread moral indignation. No better fortune for the cause of union could have befallen it than the preaching by its opponents during the period of controversy of the "decrees of God," for the recognition of which, as the exclusively orthodox Presbyterian doctrine, they approached the civil court.

Turning to the attitude of Methodism to the building of the creed, we may say that it needs few words of explanation. In truth it must be said that, while the living link of brotherhood made Methodists sensitive to any feeling of regret that might pervade the Presbyterian mind, at being constrained by the love of truth to remove the ancient landmarks of their faith, they were quietly gratified to have an opportunity of removing the necessity amongst Presbyterians of subscribing to a creed which failed to carry their present firm and studious convictions. It was to them also an opportunity of revealing the advancement of Methodist education into a more profound knowledge of theology than was suspected by many persons in other communions.

In all candour it should be stated, that the theology of Methodism had been developed far beyond the initial tests of orthodoxy which John Wesley had provided in the Articles of Religion, his own sermons, and his sketchy notes upon the New Testament. It soon became evident in the Committee that the scholarship of Methodism could justify itself as worthy of high regard. The whole Committee felt itself indebted to the luminous insight and practical wisdom of Dr. Nathaniel Burwash, Chancellor of Victoria University. With many happy solutions of apparent difficulties, he led the thought of the Committee forward, and materially assisted in well and truly laying the doctrinal foundations of the new Church.

To forward-looking Methodists the entire discussion did not reveal any necessity for radical changes in their generally accepted beliefs. The genius of all its working theology had been experimental, and therefore scientific, and its constructive idealism could not be surpassed. Such expressions in the Creed as, "And we believe that in this growth in grace Christians may attain that maturity and full assurance of faith whereby the love of God is made perfect in us," though not positively asserting in terms the Methodist doctrine of Christian perfection, was accepted as not presenting any barrier in the way of attaining

to the promised possession of the fulness of love, through Christ Jesus, by the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

To the Congregationalists fell the credit for the nearest approach to the surrender of an essential conviction, in exchange for what appeared to be the greater good of Church Union. In consenting to accept the formulation of a statement of doctrine for substantial acceptance by the whole Church, they departed from a much cherished peculiarity. The historic attitude of Congregationalism was much more radical than mere dissent from the idea of a ready made creed. Not that the Congregational body ever fell into the intellectual and moral absurdity of expressing disrespect for the right of the individual to formulate his own creed, and to bear testimony to his personal belief. It was clearly perceived by them, that if a person believes anything, however simple and intellectually undeveloped, it is his creed (*Credo*—I believe), and he has a right to it, but not to say to another, "You must believe."

This is the logical outcome of a pure Protestantism. But the value of a developed creed by way of suggestion, and as an educational influence, was inferentially exemplified by the drafting of Declarations of Faith from time to time in various parts of the world. This done, however, to every individual remained the

liberty of forming his personal judgment as to the teaching of the Bible, unbiassed by the pressure of any higher authority.

Notwithstanding this untrammelled liberty, it was a conviction of Congregationalists, that there was more theological agreement within their Churches than in those of denominations which enjoyed, or suffered from, subscription to a made ready to hand creed. And it is interesting to note, that, when the statement of the doctrine of The United Church was complete, it was clearly to be seen that the consensus of opinion of the Congregational Churches differed little, if at all, from the teaching of the Basis of Union.

CHAPTER VII

THE OPPOSITION

WHEN one comes to consider the opposition manifested by some opponents of union, it presents much interesting material for a psychological study of the contagion of prejudice. It reveals a strange medley of motives, comparable to the distractions and contradictions of an election contest, as assuredly it was in many respects. Prepossession, and in some instances quite devout prepossessions, if cleverly stimulated, were depended upon to yield stiff opposition to the whole proceeding.

It is difficult to trace the genesis of certain arguments that were advanced. Some of them were far estranged from the truth, either through ignorance or wilfulness, but their beginnings are so shadowed, that one hesitates to decide from which of these two conditions they sprang, or where responsibility rests. The one thing certain is that they were falsely conceived.

Other objections were of a different order. They were rooted in traditions which, however wanting in validity for the present day, by their very antiquity challenged the veneration of

both friends and foes of union. As such they demanded, and were worthy of, careful scrutiny and prayerful consideration.

It is easy to decide one's course in respect to a specific problem when all reason stands opposed to it as indubitably wrong. Difficulty of decision arises when two courses of action simultaneously present themselves, and each has some clearly recognized right or advantage in its favour. Doubtless many who voted in opposition to Church Union found themselves in this dilemma, and, choosing the path of least resistance, perhaps with considerable reluctance and misgiving, they gave their conservative instincts the benefit of the doubt.

Momentous decisions are oftentimes made through the influence of a background of heredity or accumulated sentiment, rather than by reasons which appeal to the foreground of judicial examination. It was, therefore, true that the opposition to Church Union was, to a great degree, a matter of settled temperament rather than rational conviction.

For non-concurrents who were affected in that way all true unionists had great sympathy. While their convictions could not be conceded, they themselves were respected for holding to them firmly. In this fact there is wrapped up some hope for reunion when further experience stimulates study of the real merits of the case, and calm consideration is given to the rational

and scriptural issues involved in it. Temperamental prejudice cannot endure in lonely and undefended isolation under the continual pressure of the common sense of most. Unionists will therefore anticipate, and welcome the findings of the future.

The expressed objections to Church Union in Canada may be classified in a general way as those which appealed to a mass of inherited or preconceived prejudice, and those which were put forth and maintained with more or less cogency and force by a process of reasoning.

Lying upon the surface of the former class was the oft bandied expression, "the superiority of the Presbyterians." This had an emphatic, if amusing, manifestation when certain "continuing Presbyterian" ladies adorned themselves with blue ribbons, in token of their blue blood, and in emphasis of their opposition to the proposed union. They seemed to be quite oblivious of the fact that a superiority complex, when translated into a term of morality, simply corresponds to that old-fashioned word *pride*, something which, according to holy writ, cannot be conceived of as adorning the doctrines of the grace of God. The unionists could claim no higher virtue than the grace of humility, but clothed with that they were undisturbed by any exalted pretensions. In India the caste system might, with some show of reason, be raised as a barrier against common

association in religious life; but in the Church of Jesus Christ "the rich and poor meet together, the Lord being the Maker of them all," and "the eye cannot say to the hand I have no need of you."

Somewhat analogous to the manifestation of prejudice just mentioned was the claim made by a leading anti-unionist, that "the Presbyterian is the earliest type of organization in human history for the worship and service of the true God." The basic proof put forth for this extraordinary claim was God's command to Moses, "Go gather the *elders* of Israel." Ex. 3: 16. The missing link between the two forms of organization, if ecclesiastical organization there was, while the Israelites were in Egyptian bondage, is that there is no evidence at hand that the elders were elected by the people, or that they made the laws which governed the people. "The law was given by Moses," and the people accepted it implicitly from him. It was a marvellous exhibition of a divinely appointed and inspired autocracy, which has no resemblance in form to the democracy which is now extolled as the ancient and glorious attribute of Presbyterianism, and which is said to be violated in The United Church of Canada.

With similar simplicity and equal conclusiveness Methodism might advance the claim, that before the followers of Jesus were called

Christians, they were known as Methodists. The word Methodist is derived from two Greek words: *meta*—after, and *hodos*, a way. St. Paul, while yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went to the High Priest of the Jewish religion, and desired of him letters unto the synagogues of Damascus that if he found any of *the way* he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Upon that flimsy foundation Methodists, if they had been foolish enough to do so, might have claimed that they carried the earliest name applied to Christians.

The argument that the Presbyterian form of government dated back to the captivity of the Israelites in Egypt, with much other reasoning from the same source, may be dismissed as due to the violent prejudices of early education, and to an ultra conservative temperament, and not to a particularly brilliant attempt at exegesis.

There were many other appeals to ill-founded prejudices, the sources of which we are not even anxious to discover, such as that the Methodist Church “would swallow up the Presbyterian.” It is sufficient to say, that, in the short history of The United Church, not the slightest evidence can be adduced to prove such a desire, or reveal the outcropping of any activity in that direction. There are some Methodists who think that the opposite ten-

dency is observable; but a careful study of the alleged grounds of this suggestion will yield evidence, that, on the whole, parity of advantage in the organization of the Church has been wonderfully observed. Doubtless ex-Presbyterians, now in The United Church, could be found who think that their element in The United Church has suffered in the matter of representation; but again a candid view will show, that the spirit of equity and fellowship, which has been manifested since the Union, is as wonderful as the fact of Union itself.

Apart from objections urged against union, which sprang out of prejudice or temperament, there were others worthy of more respectful consideration.

The first instance of that class which came to the notice of the writer was, that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada had no power to commit the whole body to union. Two grounds for that contention were advanced. It was held that the Presbyterian Church was merely a "voluntary fellowship," and therefore all votes of the Assembly, Presbyteries and people, looking toward union were "*ultra vires*, invalid and of no effect." As a corollary of that position it was stated, that the Presbyterian Church was not a legal entity, and therefore was untouchable by the civil government.

The second constitutional objection was,

that the Presbyterian Church contained no provision in its ordinances for terminating its existence.

Obviously it does not come within the scope of a layman, in regard to the interpretation of the law of a Church with which he was not connected prior to Union, to discuss the intricacies of its form of government. Whether Church Union was permissible or not was a question for the household of Presbyterianism to decide. There could be no doubt, however, in the mind of an outsider that the General Assembly was convinced that it had the power, having complied with the constitutional safeguards provided, to consummate union. Had it been void of that power, all action relating thereto should have been estopped shortly after the beginning of negotiations. Every vote taken became an additional testimony on the part of the Assembly to its competence to complete what it had begun.

The writer has in his possession, in the handwriting of Dr. Robert Campbell, at that time Joint Clerk of the Assembly, and a gentleman consistently opposed to union, a notification of the action of that body finally committing the Presbyterian Church to organic union with the Methodist and Congregational Churches in Canada. The resolution was carried by a vote of 406 to 90, and was certified and sent to the writer as General Super-

intendent of the Methodist Church. Though feeling the constraint of a strong sense of official duty, it is scarcely conceivable that the venerable Dr. Campbell would have forwarded this communication had he believed that it was beyond the competency of the Assembly to adopt it. With that declaration in hand, the Methodist General Conference was satisfied as to the power of Assembly anent the fulfilment of union. The Parliament of Canada with the Legislative Assemblies of the Provinces concurred with that view of the case.

The other constitutional objection to union, namely, that the Presbyterian Church had no provision in its constitution for its extinction, can hardly be taken seriously. By various unions in Canada more than forty Christian bodies were united prior to the coming together of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches; and it is not probable that any one of these was provided in advance with a form of procedure for its own extinction.

A going concern, begun with a prospect of prosperity, would stultify itself, if, at the outset of its career, it made provision for the winding up of its affairs. The law and legislation of the land are sufficient for meeting such an emergency. Moreover, not one of the uniting Churches was really extinguished. They were simply put in the way of fulfilling the essential purposes for which they came into existence.

Jesus came not to destroy but to fulfil the law and the prophets. Christianity subsumed all that was worth preserving in Judaism. The Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches were not destroyed. They were fulfilled by carrying into The United Church all that was essential in the pre-existing denominations, and placing the contribution of each in such relation to the whole as to expand and make the new organization a more perfect instrument for realizing in greater fullness the divine purpose of the Christian Church.

It had become quite evident, through the intensive study of denominationalism by forward-looking Christian leaders, that it was an inefficient if not improper representation of true fellowship in Christ Jesus. They were also satisfied, that the Churches proposing to enter into union could not perfectly fulfil their divine purpose in Canada under separate organizations. These convictions constitute a full apology, if one were needed, for the formation of The United Church of Canada. Such convictions are seizing with increasing power daily the heart of the Christian world.

There is an International Congregational Council, a Pan Presbyterian Alliance and an Ecumenical Methodist Conference. It became the task of The United Church of Canada to convince the representatives of these world-wide organizations that The United Church

contained in its doctrines and Church government the things considered essential in each of the three denominations which entered union; also that its activities stressed the important objectives for which they stood. This was necessary in order to secure admission into the world-wide family of each Church, and it was happily accomplished. No question appears to have been raised by any of the mother Churches as to whether provision for carrying their identity into the new Church was in the ecclesiastical constitution of their Canadian co-religionists.

If it were conceded that denominations must wait for authority of that sort before undertaking union, all advance of the disciples of Christ toward that goal would be completely deadlocked, and hope for the reunion of Christendom might as well be definitely, immediately, and for ever abandoned.

Active opposition to Church Union was stimulated, strengthened and made concrete by the opportunity conferred under the Act of Union upon any congregation of the three Churches desiring to do so, to take a vote of its membership as to whether or not they wished to continue a part of The United Church. This privilege was not the result of a struggle on the part of anti-unionists to obtain it. It was provided in drafting the Union Bill at the behest of a General Assembly, the majority of which was in favour of union.

The Assembly, when finally committing itself to union, in 1916, expressed a desire that the proposed Act of Incorporation should make proper provision to guard the rights and privileges of any minority that might be opposed to union. In former Presbyterian unions this privilege had been in effect, and appeared to be considered as a traditional right in respect to further unions.

In previous Methodist unions such a provision had never obtained, and therefore did not appear to them to be necessary in relation to the union of 1925. The Church Union Committee of the Methodist Church considered the matter *pro forma* as one of the amendments to the Basis of Union proposed by the Presbyterian Committee, but took no action pro or con. There was no known demand for such a right or privilege in Methodism, and although Methodists had an equal right with Presbyterians under the Act of Parliament to vote out, in only one instance in the whole Church was the attempt made to do so, and that failed to carry.

Not having had any experience of such a privilege the Methodist view was, that it was intended for the relief of any who supposedly might have conscientious scruples against union; or that it might be used in special cases where, owing to peculiar circumstances or conditions of an honourable sort, it seemed

inadvisable for a congregation to enter The United Church. They did not dream that a house to house canvass would be made to secure opposition votes; much less could they predict the persuasions that would be used to that end.

The right to vote out furnished an opportunity to circulate petitions and pledges against union, and by the use of electioneering methods to raise the spirit of contention to fever heat. The litigation that followed in respect to Church property created bickerings and bitterness and clove asunder lifelong friendships in many localities.

The impression that has been assiduously cultivated, that non-concurrents alone suffered from being robbed of their Church homes and possessions does not truly represent the state of facts. Unionists who were in the minority also suffered severe losses in Church and manse property.

The writer was brought into contact with an instance where unionists were turned out of their church and manse, and lost their communion sets, on the margin of one vote. Four hundred and ninety-one ballots were cast; two hundred and forty-five of which were in favour of union, and two hundred and forty-six against. In losing their church and manse they suffered loss and disability in the same manner

as non-concurrents who happened to be in the minority in any charge.

The method of determining possession of property by a majority vote worked hardship on both sides; but, in spite of its lamentable results, it was the most democratic arrangement that could be devised for settling a confessedly difficult question. It was a phase of the Church Union movement which painfully impressed every one associated with it, and from considering which we turn away not without a sense of relief, but certainly with a feeling of sadness.

Inasmuch as it is undeniable that in much of Christendom a deep interest is felt in a question which is often asked, namely, "How was it that so much of the strength of the Presbyterian Church failed to join The United Church?" we shall advance one more reason for that fact.

That reason is found in the allegation of gross heterodoxy in the Methodist Church. The charge was summed up in a tract advertised as for sale at the office of the Presbyterian Association at two dollars per hundred, as follows: "We have shown . . . that the Methodist Church is an apostate Church; that it no longer believes in the atoning death of Christ, or the inspiration of the Scriptures, or the infallibility of Christ." Then followed an appeal to the members of the Presbyterian Church "not to hand over their money or their

Church property to have them used to teach an emasculated gospel, which declares that our Lord was mistaken and fallible; that He did not die for sinners; that He only set an example; and that we must save ourselves by our works."

To those who knew Methodism such a description was a caricature of its teaching. Some of the charges were categorically false; such as, Jesus "did not die for sinners, that He only set an example, and that we must save ourselves by our works." Other statements indicated the failure of those who wrote the criticism to understand the Methodist position, because it was expressed in terminology unfamiliar to them, while accepting substantially the same truth.

According to a purpose in the Methodist Church, which ran through the whole controversial period, Methodism made but a slight defence of itself.

However, it was ably defended by its Presbyterian allies. They found that extracts, so called, from Methodist publications, "were not genuine, while others were incorrectly quoted, or were wrested from their context, and thus made to convey a meaning never intended by their authors, nor indicative of the attitude of the Methodist Church towards the great fundamental truths of our Christian religion."

The present writer is not so much concerned

with the untruth as with the unfairness, conscious or otherwise, of the attack upon Methodism.

It was represented in the "Open Letter to the Members and Adherents of the Presbyterian Church," that a certain series of tracts was issued "by the authority of the General Conference." This is true, but in all fairness it should be said that it conveys a wrong impression if read without any further explanation. Naturally the inference drawn from that statement was, that the contents of the series of tracts were known to and approved by the General Conference. The fact is, that, whether the teaching of the tracts would have been acceptable to the General Conference or not, they were written and published months after that body had adjourned, and they never passed under its review.

In this connection it should be said, that the authoritative interpretation of the doctrines of Methodism was never permitted to any one man, or any small group of men. The Methodist Church was not such an autocratic institution as to place in the hands, say, of the Principal or Professor of any College, the editor of a Connexional Organ, the General Superintendent, or any Board of the Church, the power to pronounce finally upon any particular interpretation of a doctrine of the Church. To one authority only was such

power committed, and that was an Annual Conference on the occasion of the trial of a minister accused of heterodoxy. At the same time their power was limited to the duty of deciding what was not Methodist doctrine. By these means Methodism permitted a wide range of liberty of thought, while retaining to itself in necessary cases the power to guard itself against obnoxious error.

The articles of religion of the Methodist Church set forth the liberty and limitations of its ministers. They declared that, "The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith or thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

But, whether true or false, the doctrines of the Methodist Church were not carried as such into The United Church, and Methodist doctrine should not have been attacked to prevent union. Methodism should have been judged by its willingness or unwillingness to accept the doctrines contained in the Basis of Union. These were heartily accepted by Methodists. To attack Methodism was only to draw the proverbial red herring across the track to prevent union.

The doctrines of The United Church of Canada concerning the questions in dispute were as follows:

ARTICLE 6. *Of the Grace of God.*

We believe that God out of His great love for the world has given His only begotten Son to be the Saviour of sinners, and in the Gospel freely offers His all-sufficient salvation to all men.

ARTICLE 9. *Of Regeneration.*

We believe in the necessity of regeneration, whereby we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus by the Spirit of God.

ARTICLE 10. *Of Faith and Repentance.*

We believe that faith in Christ is a saving grace whereby we receive Him, trust in Him, and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered to us in the Gospel.

Had not the questions in dispute been darkened by counsel without knowledge, a number of consecrated and influential Presbyterians who turned away from The United Church would now be within its fold.

CHAPTER VIII

MISCONCEPTIONS REMOVED

THE path of progress toward Church Union was strewn with misconceptions, some of which were of trifling import, while others erected barriers of great consequence to an impartial and sympathetic understanding and appreciation of the issues involved. We shall refer first to those of lesser importance.

An illusion was created to the effect, that, immediately upon union taking place, all congregations scattered throughout the country would be compelled to come together in their several localities. The people of The United Church now know better. They know that the essence of the union consisted of the merging of the three supreme courts of the Churches and of their administrative departments. The uniting of congregations where deemed advisable was an aftermath, and came about not by the exercise of force, but by the free will of the people immediately concerned. Until such amalgamations took place, congregations went forward under their previous forms of government, and had the privilege of continuing the same indefinitely. Only newly

organized congregations were under the necessity of conforming to the constitution provided in the Basis of Union.

As we have already seen, it was further provided, that if any individual congregation desired to withdraw from The United Church, it had the unchallenged right to do so on a simple majority vote, and to carry with it its congregational property, within six months after the Royal Assent had been given to the Act of Incorporation.

An important section of the Act of Union provided for the appointment of a Commission by the Dominion Government to make an equitable settlement between The United Church, and the organization of the non-concurring Presbyterians in respect to the division of the general property of the erstwhile Presbyterian Church in Canada. This Commission consisted of three members recommended by The United Church, three others representing the non-concurrents, and three more recommended jointly by the six already mentioned. This Commission was not placed under any regulations whatever. No principles of procedure were laid down for its guidance. It was at perfect liberty to measure equal justice to all parties concerned.

Never before in the history of Church Union movements was the minority treated with so

much consideration and generosity in respect to any conceivable claim that might be made.

The Law and Legislation Committee of the Joint Committee on Church Union, which was charged with the duty of drafting proposed legislation to be presented to Parliament, probably spent more time and were more meticulously careful in safeguarding the rights of non-concurrent minorities than upon any other feature of their work.

Granted that union should take place at the request of a large majority of the people concerned, any fairer treatment of the minorities than they received was inconceivable and impracticable.

Another illusion, amounting in effect to a delusion, was that the Methodist Church was seeking union on account of the exhaustion of her financial strength.

At that moment the value of real property held by the Methodist Church was returned as \$57,087,429, which carried an indebtedness of only 6.61 per cent. of its value. It had an invested endowment of \$2,233,505 to protect the claims of its worn-out ministers, and the widows of that class. The investments and endowments of the Church as a whole amounted to \$62,840,839. These facts are an eloquent refutation of the insinuations made in respect to the financial weakness of the Methodist Connexion. And here it may be said, that the

givings of individual Methodists since the union are not open to reflection.

It was asserted, also, that Methodism had no regulative principle. But in truth it had the most effective regulation; the principle of life which governs the structure and movements of all animated beings in creation. Life, and the purposes of Christian life were its dominating principle, and these sufficed.

The good Presbyterian people were assured that they would be robbed of the right to call their ministers; that the revered and historic office of elders in the Church would cease; that the Church would be creedless; and a number of other allegations were made calculated to depress enthusiasm for, and create revolt against the idea of a United Church. The logic of experience and the facts of history have shown that these assertions were mere bugaboos, born of ignorance or prejudice or both.

Even the anti-union writer who charged that Methodism had "no fixed principles of government," declared on another page, that "Methodism was better organized than any other Protestant denomination and resembles in this respect the Church of Rome, and its monastic orders." This statement extends itself toward the opposite pole, and errs from the truth as far as the assertion that Methodism had no fixed principles of government. He

recovered his balance, however, by saying, that "Methodism has efficient machinery with an abundance of steam, and is admirably adapted for pioneer work in America." The dictate of prejudice was cancelled by the compulsion of history.

It was also assumed that Methodism demanded union as the fulfilment of a contract. Natural as such a conclusion might seem, it is not true. No suggestion of that sort was ever uttered by a responsible Methodist during the long years of deferred negotiation; and it is safe to say that no Congregationalist ever entertained such a sentiment. The project under consideration was too sacred to be violated by a self-regarding or time-serving spirit.

At the same time, to the honour of the Presbyterian unionists, it should be said, that they pleaded for perseverance toward union against all opposition as a solemn obligation of their Church, and the General Assembly gave formal assurance to the other negotiating bodies of their full sense of responsibility for the status of negotiations.

It is also true, that no one could look with impartial eye upon the joint proceedings which implemented union without admitting that for any party to it to abandon the movement, unless unforeseen obstructions presented themselves, could hardly be construed in any other light than as a breach of faith. While Con-

gregationalists and Methodists never pressed that view, it is impossible for them not to rejoice in the probity of the Presbyterians who held firmly to their convictions and saw the union through. In this connection it will very readily be seen, that, after twenty years of negotiation and more than twenty years of co-operation, the restoration of the *statu quo ante* would have been an impossibility.

In many forms of repetition it was asserted that an attempt was being made to blot out the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Having in view the character of the Presbyterian leaders in the union movement, it is impossible to imagine how such an opinion could find lodgment in any sane mind. Such a judgment condemns the wisest and noblest men who ever adorned the Presbyterian ministry in Canada.

The most violent prejudice against union could not in any moment of calmness arraign Principal George Munro Grant as a traitor to the Presbyterian Church; yet, in lecturing to his divinity class in Queen's University, he used these words:

Gentlemen, you and I are not responsible for the existing divisions of Christendom, but I beg you not to accept ordination until you are convinced that should you by word or deed perpetuate these divisions by one unnecessary day you will have been unworthy of your ordination.

Equally emphatic was the testimony of Principal Caven, of Knox College, who said:

While in the wise and merciful providence of God divisions in the Christian Church have often been overruled for good, yet in themselves these divisions are to be lamented as productive of many and sore evils. The ideal of the unity of believers set forth in the scriptures, especially in our Lord's Intercessory Prayer, while chiefly spiritual in its nature, can be fully represented only in an undivided state of the visible Church, in which perfect fellowship shall be maintained throughout the entire body of Christ; and it is the duty of the Church, and of all its members, continually to aspire towards and labour for the completeness of this manifested union in the Lord.

At another time he said:

Spiritual union, if complete and unhampered, must seek adequately to represent itself in outward organic unity.

These great Presbyterians believed, that the Presbyterian Church in Canada should coalesce with others in the form of organic union, but never would have conceded that union implied blotting out Presbyterianism. It would be the height of nonsense to impeach such men as traitors to the Presbyterian Church.

The leaders of the union movement of this day are fully exonerated and endorsed by the example of these giants of an earlier time. In following these able men, they clothe themselves with equal respect and honour. The

denunciations which were hurled against the Presbyterian leaders during the union controversy should be resented and repelled by all who reverence their great predecessors. Moreover, the men who led the Presbyterian Church into union owe more than words can express to the Church of their fathers; and it would be an extreme of unreason, of which they are incapable, to consider for a moment that they desired to inflict injury upon the staff and pillar of their spiritual life. Such a suggestion should be for ever unthinkable. They aimed not to destroy their beloved Church, but to aid it in fulfilling its high providential destiny. And though their names were for a moment clouded with unmerited obloquy, they will shine undimmed for ever in the history of The United Church of Canada.

The writer dislikes to introduce any reference to himself amid the many misconceptions that strewed the pathway towards Church Union. But inasmuch as the misrepresentation was repeated a thousand times, and came to be believed by some of his friends, it is due to him and The United Church that the actual truth be set forth. It is a misrepresentation that some opponents of union fairly revelled in making on the platform and in the press. In short, it consisted in the assertion, that the General Superintendent of the Methodist Church expected and intended that the proposed new

Church should be “a *religio-political machine* incorporated as per Basis of Union for religio-political ends.”

The writer, who was General Superintendent of Methodism at the time, has this to say—that he never used the expression “religio-political machine” in describing his conception of The United Church of Canada. That expression was foisted upon him. Fortunately, the address in which it is alleged the expression in question is found was published in full in *The Christian Guardian* of June 28, 1922.* The most careful reading of this correctly reported address will fail to find the expression “religio-political machine,” or any equivalent to it. In the address it was recognized that there was ecclesiastical competition in Canada, and some forms of the competition indicated a battle for religious supremacy. The address also recognized, that there was danger in Canada that ecclesiastical influence should be used to obtain public or political advantage. The sphere or field in which that might be used was described as the religio-political realm. Not the slightest suggestion was made regarding the formation of a “religio-political machine,” or a machine of any sort in The United Church; and the writer had no thought whatever of using any but moral and spiritual influence to promote the interests of the people of Canada. He was

*This issue is still on file at the place of publication, 299 Queen St. West, Toronto.

simply condemning the thing that, by inference, the opponents of union desired to be condemned. The Church does not become a political machine by merely representing to the Government its convictions upon any moral question. If so, almost every Church in the country would be open to condemnation.

Surely it does not require any special ingenuity to distinguish between a field of grain and the reaping machine which is used to cut it down. The hope of the writer was, that The United Church might be the very opposite of a machine; or, in other words, might by its moral influence be an agency for counteracting any proceeding involving unjust aggression upon the rights of the Canadian people anywhere for corporately selfish purposes.

After all, it mattered little what his personal feeling might be in regard to any political action in Canada. The importance of this misrepresentation lay in the unwarranted prejudice it aroused in the minds of persons opposed to union between Church and state; a position they had every right to take, but their opposition was misplaced and groundless.

The utter falsity and absurdity of the statement referred to would be apparent to any well informed individual who would stop to think of the impossibility of commandeering Presbyterians, Congregationalists or Methodists to subvert their spiritual convictions or

stultify their common sense by supporting such a hair-brained scheme; but the fact that it emanated from a source usually relied upon for truthfulness made it most mischievous.

Neither the Basis of Union nor the Act of Incorporation contains the vestige of such an idea; but, sad to say, the bandying about of this misrepresentation, although it was contradicted when first made, answered its purpose in decreasing the vote in favour of union.

Only one more misconception will be mentioned. When, after a period of long delay in the progress of the union movement, during which there was little discussion, it was feared by some officials of Methodism, that members of Parliament had concluded that the silence of Methodists indicated that they had lost heart, and had become careless about the issue, the General Superintendent was requested by the Executive of the Methodist Union Committee to request the officers and members of the Methodist Church to make plain to their parliamentary representatives that they still stood for union; he was branded as a pope, a dictator, and so on, and caricatured as flourishing a big stick, as if it were he that was speaking and not the great Church of which for the time being he was the obedient mouthpiece. As well might Dr. Robert Campbell be pronounced a unionist because he forwarded the

official documents of the Presbyterian Church declaring itself ready for union.

If it were a crime to acquaint the members of the Legislative Assembly of the real sentiments of their supporters, then democracy would be so cribbed, cabined and confined as to be non-existent. The quality of representation is the essence of democracy. But enough!

When one considers the misconceptions which prevailed, the house to house canvass made for non-concurrent votes, the effect of the "non-church-going" votes, the wonder is not that so many persons voted against union, but that such a large majority staunchly and conscientiously supported it, and carried it to a distinguished success.

CHAPTER IX

THE CONSUMMATION

THE consummation of Church Union in Canada calls for a recital of the status and contribution of each denomination entering into that spiritual compact.

In a comparative statement prepared by the Rev. George C. Pidgeon, D.D., to correct certain false impressions current during the negotiations relating to union, the respective strength of the three Churches proposing to unite was tabulated as follows:

CONGREGATIONAL

Population according to the Dominion census of 1921 was.....	30,574
Number of members.....	12,762
Total Sunday School force.....	11,132
Givings last year for all purposes.....	\$329,827
Ministers' stipends paid by circuits or congregations, exclusive of parsonage or manse.....	\$113,000
Woman's Missionary Society.....	\$15,145
Real property values.....	\$2,189,000
Debt on all real property.....	\$138,065
Pension Fund endowments.....	\$113,115
College endowments, Missions reserves and Trust Funds, including Woman's Missionary Society.....	\$261,739

METHODIST

Population per Dominion Census of 1921.....	1,158,714
Number of members.....	407,261
Total Sunday School force.....	470,904
Givings last year for all purposes.....	\$9,209,276
Ministers' stipends paid by circuits or congregations, exclusive of manse or parsonage.....	\$2,520,282
Woman's Missionary Society.....	\$457,707
Real property values.....	\$57,067,422
Debt on all real property.....	\$3,761,739
College endowments.....	\$2,819,437
Pension Fund endowments.....	\$2,278,477
Mission Reserves and Trust Funds, including Woman's Missionary Society.....	\$675,496

PRESBYTERIAN

Population per Dominion Census of 1921.....	1,408,812
Number of members.....	369,939
Total Sunday School force.....	393,942
Givings last year for all purposes.....	\$9,187,512
Ministers' stipends raised by circuits or congregations, exclusive of parsonage or manse.....	\$2,768,150
Woman's Missionary Society revenue.....	\$435,008
Real property values.....	\$40,000,000
Debt upon all real property.....	\$4,075,461
College endowments.....	\$1,623,184
Pension Fund endowments.....	\$1,919,317
Mission Reserves and Trust Funds, including Woman's Missionary Society.....	\$725,573

Dr. Pidgeon added, that while the Presbyterian population exceeded the Methodist by 250,078, the membership of the Methodist Church exceeded the Presbyterian by 37,325; and the Methodist Church owned over \$17,000,000 worth of Church property more than the Presbyterian, while the Presbyterian debt upon its property was in excess of the Methodist debt by \$313,722.

This statement was graciously prepared in reply to a current insinuation, that the Methodist Church was unable to pay its debts and was seeking refuge under the golden wings of Presbyterianism.

At the consummation of Church Union the most accurate statistics available show, that the total number of congregations which entered The United Church from the three denominations was 8,691, compared with 792 which remained out. 784 of these were Presbyterian and 8 Congregational. The non-concurrent Presbyterian vote amounts to 30.18 per cent. of the membership.

In a word, the three historic denominations came into union with a loss of less than eight and one-half per cent. of the total congregations, and of about twelve per cent. of the self-sustaining charges.

Of 655 missionaries of the uniting Churches in the foreign field at the date of union, there were but 17 (including men, their wives, and

single women), who severed themselves from the work of The United Church of Canada. The number of principals and professors in colleges departing from The United Church was also exceedingly small.

Turning from the statistical to what may be called the spiritual contributions to The United Church, we may present the following summary. Here it will be observed that there was considerable overlapping in the treasures and traditions of the uniting denominations. This is due to the fact that they were all inspired to a great degree by similar motives; though differing to a noticeable extent in securing similar results, and differing also in their individual emphasis upon certain theological doctrines.

The Presbyterians stood for and brought into The United Church as one of their cardinal principles confidence in the Divine Sovereignty. As correlative to this faith there was the rejection of moral responsibility to either Pope, Bishop or Priest, or of the right to governance on the part of any of them. The Presbyterians contributed to the new body a consciousness of spiritual independence, which had been historically secured in defiance of secular despotism and ecclesiastical tyranny. Amongst its revered treasures was the story of the Solemn League and Covenant, and the unswerving fealty of the Covenanters to their faith, even

resisting unto blood. The historian, Froude, declared, that, "Whatever the cause might be, the Calvinists were the fighting Protestants."

Presbyterianism also brought into The United Church a strong sense of Christian democracy, expressed, in part, by an eldership chosen by the people, and sharing in the administration of all the courts of the Church. It insisted upon equality of ministerial orders and identified Bishop and Presbyter as of one order only. It stood also for freedom from state control, believing that Church and State are co-ordinate powers, mutually independent, but at the same time mutually helpful.

It will be readily seen by those who are acquainted with the inner spirit and working of Methodism and Congregationalism, that these bodies were characterized by the same principles as Presbyterianism, though the latter had its own peculiar emphasis woven into its fabric by the loom of history.

The Congregational contribution included faith in the living Holy Spirit as able and willing to guide man to-day, as in the past, both in faith and conduct. It stood for spiritual freedom, and against state interference or control in the government of the Church. From time to time it formulated credal statements as worthy of consideration, but it scorned the

voice of authoritarianism in that realm. It combined independence of the local congregation with denominational fellowship. It accepted the priesthood of all believers, the minister being only first among equals. It exercised a spirit of toleration and co-operation with all who strive to advance the Kingdom of God.

Congregational Churches for three hundred years have been served by very able and outstanding preachers on both sides of the Atlantic. As a body, they have been intensely interested in education and unfaltering in missionary activity.

Among their noblest missionaries was John Williams, the apostle of the South Seas, and the martyr of Erromanga. He built the first Christian Church in the Pacific Islands. He baptized the king, but with friends he was massacred and eaten by cannibals. Robert Moffat was renowned as a translator of the Scriptures. He gave sixty-three years of service, and was the means of the conversion of the terrible Chief King Khama. He had the distinction also of being the father-in-law of David Livingstone. David Livingstone, as is well known, was the king of modern discoverers. He opened Central Africa to missionary endeavour, and united distinguished philanthropy with incomparable exploration. Robert Morrison was the pioneer and founder

of Protestant Missions in China. He translated a grammar, a dictionary, then tracts, Gospels, and finally the whole Bible.

These are a few of a great galaxy of self-sacrificing missionaries that adorn the annals of Congregationalism, and whose memories and achievements are the heritage of The United Church of Canada.

The Methodist Church brought in the legacy of a confirmed belief in the universal possibility of salvation for every soul of man. The value of the witness of the spirit, to the fact of adoption into the family of God, was much in evidence in its early preaching. Its high appreciation of the fact of conversion, and the worth of testimony, linked it in the spiritual realm to the canons of scientific discovery and propagation of truth. It believed in a divine creative activity acting upon the human mind in revealing power, they that were willing to do the will of God being taught of God. It sought to supply the spirit and life without which practical theology would have little data to work upon. Its emphasis was upon life and work rather than upon scholastic theology.

Methodism was deeply involved in measures of social reform, and in the improvement of public and private morals. Congenitally it moved toward Christian unity under the ægis of its founder, John Wesley, who stretched out

the hand of brotherhood to all believers, and whose spirit was felt to brood over the deliberations of his followers through all the years of negotiation. His conception of love, as the cement of unity, caused him to take a tolerant view of mere opinions, and to express the conviction "that orthodoxy, or right opinion, is at best but a slender part of religion if it can be allowed to be any part at all," and to declare: "I desire to have a league offensive and defensive with every soldier of Jesus Christ."

Such, in brief, were the principal characteristics of the three denominations which became one Church of the living God in June, 1925. In many respects their Christian convictions coalesced previously to union, and in no essential principle did they conflict. By the Holy Spirit they were led to declare their unity, and to manifest and seal it in organic union before the world at large in a supremely impressive inauguration service.

The consummation of union drew forth the most laudatory remarks from the highest ranks of journalism in Anglo-Saxondom.

The British Weekly stated:

It is the most important step in the history of Christendom for many generations, and one that represents something that must be accomplished in other lands as well.

The London Times said:

The United Church of Canada makes an appeal to the imagination that is lacking in any merely co-operative scheme. Really to have transcended denominational creeds is an achievement of a high order and without parallel.

An eminent minister, the Rev. Leyton Richards, writing to *The Christian World*, of London, England, expressed himself as follows:

I am at present in charge of a United Church in Toronto in temporary exchange with Dr. Richard Roberts, who is now at Carr's Lane, and I have just finished a tour of all the Conferences, five in number, in the Province of Ontario. My chief rôle has been that of inquirer, with public addresses thrown in as the price of attendance; and I came back from my visitation with the conviction that no single principle of any one of the uniting denominations has been sacrificed. Union, therefore, is not merely a logical unification (validated as it is by Act of Parliament), but a great spiritual achievement, and as impressive as it is great.

CHAPTER X

INAUGURATION

A T long length the day for hallowing the new Church drew on. The service proved to be "one crowded hour of glorious life." No one who was present will ever forget the spiritual power and sublimity of the occasion. It was not the result of mass psychology, though the magnitude of the congregation contributed to the depth of feeling produced and manifested. Prayer had been made throughout the three uniting Churches, that a signal and significant blessing from on high might mark the event. As on the day of Pentecost, all being of one accord in one place, they received a baptism of the spirit of God in a degree unprecedented in their experience.

It was said by an intelligent participant, that "The consummation of the union on June 10, 1925, was an event unparalleled in the history of Canada; perhaps in the ecclesiastical history of the world."

Lest the writer might be suspected of undue bias owing to his intimate association with the event, and also to give it the impressive setting which it deserves, he will use the following extracts from the daily press to describe this great and unique occasion. He does so im-

pelled by the conviction, that the consummation of the union is an event of widespread and historic religious interest.

One newspaper declared, in anticipation of the event:

“Never since Confederation has so nationwide a compact been achieved as that which will come to its consummation to-day in this central city of the Dominion. The significance of the event is appreciated not only by the people of Canada—for they were arriving in hundreds yesterday from every corner of the country—but scores from the United States and many from overseas were clamouring for tickets.

“Special correspondents from leading newspapers in the United States and one from Australia have applied for seats in the Press Gallery, until the accommodation is exhausted and will have to be augmented.

“Not only in Toronto will these inaugural services be held. In every town and village in Canada where there is a United Church similar services will be conducted, some of them simultaneously with the central function in Toronto, others at a later date. Many of the smaller towns have arranged for open-air services in the public parks, and the setting aside of the whole day for a celebration of the historic event. Special services are also being held for the children in many instances.”

After the event another correspondent wrote:

“Rivalling in intensity of religious fervour and attendance any Protestant revival which the world has ever witnessed, yesterday morning’s gathering will live long in the memories of those fortunate enough to be present. Beneath the lofty arched roof of the great Arena, the sacred covenant of union was signed on a sheepskin parchment by the leaders of the three uniting Churches, the while a sea of upward of seven thousand upturned faces gazed on the spectacle in silent reverence and prayer.

“But probably the most inspiring and deeply devotional procedure of the morning was the administration of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper to the mighty throng. It was a reverent concourse of people who sat in deep silent devotion as the bread and the wine were passed from hand to hand, symbolic of belief in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Some two hundred and fifty laymen—elders from the Presbyterian Church, stewards from the Methodist Church, and deacons from the Congregational Church—moved smoothly and quietly through the tiers of seats, and though the entire celebration was completed in about half an hour, there seemed no undue haste, but rather the slow, methodical progress which marks the service of Communion in any church gathering.

“As the crashing chords of the time-honoured

hymn, 'The Church's One Foundation,' brought the entire gathering to its feet, three streams of delegates, the three hundred and fifty Commissioners to the First General Council, filed through the northern doorway and congregated in the seats reserved for them in the centre of the Arena directly in front of the platform. Upon the platform the chieftains of the affiliating denominations were already grouped—Rev. Dr. S. D. Chown, General Superintendent of the Methodist Church; Rev. Dr. George C. Pidgeon, Moderator of the recent Presbyterian Assembly, who stood at the left; Rev. Dr. W. H. Warriner, Chairman of the Congregational Union, on the right; and a score of others, including delegates from the English, Irish, Scottish and United States Presbyterian and Methodist Churches.

"The first words of this momentous service, 'O Lord, open Thou our lips,' were uttered by Dr. Chown immediately at the conclusion of the hymn, and in chorus the vast audience replied, 'And our mouth shall show forth Thy praise.' Then followed the singing of that old Presbyterian favourite, 'Old Hundredth.'

"Rev. Dr. Warriner spoke the first prayer, one of invocation, after which the General Confession and the Lord's Prayer were chorused by the congregation. Methodist hearts flamed with remembrance and pride as

the next hymn was announced, that famous composition of Charles Wesley's, 'Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing,' and the audience as with one voice took up the refrain and sang from the depths of its soul.

"Concerted recital of Psalm 118, 'O give thanks unto the Lord,' was followed by the *Te Deum Laudamus*, rendered by Dr. H. A. Fricker's Union Chorus of some 250 voices, during which all remained standing. The Scriptural lesson from St. John 12: verses 1, 2, 6 and 17 to 23, was read by Rev. Dr. Warriner, who also prayed in thanksgiving and self-consecration for the unity and prosperity of the Church, for all peoples, for our country, and the general intercession."

The Hallowing of Church Union, with every one standing reverently, was a most impressive sight. The exact procedure follows:

Rev. Dr. S. D. Chown: To the glory of God the Father, who has called us by His grace; and of His Son Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave Himself for us; and of the Holy Spirit, who illumines and sanctifies us:

All: This Church of Christ is consecrate.

Dr. Chown: For the worship of God in praise and prayer; for the preaching of the everlasting Gospel; for the administration of the Holy Sacraments:

All: This Church of Christ is consecrate.

Dr. Chown: For the edifying of the body of

Christ; for the evangelizing of the world; for the promotion of righteousness and good will:

All: This Church of Christ is consecrate.

Dr. Chown: In the unity of faith; in the bonds of Christian brotherhood, and in charity to all:

All: This Church of Christ is consecrate.

Dr. Chown: Having part among the brethren in the inheritance of Apostles and Prophets, Fathers and Teachers, Martyrs and Evangelists:

All: We give thanks unto the Father who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Presbyterian Moderator: According to the grace given unto our fathers, as witnesses to the Apostolic Gospel, and standard bearers of the Church commissioned to make disciples of all nations, more especially in the manifestation of the Spirit in vigilance for Christ's Kirk and Covenant, in care for the spread of education and devotion to sacred learning, receive ye our inheritance among them that are sanctified.

Congregational Union Chairman: According to the grace given unto our fathers, as witnesses to the Apostolic Gospel and standard bearers of the Church commissioned to make disciples of all nations, more especially in the manifestation of the Spirit in the liberty of prophesying, the love of spiritual freedom and the enforcement of civic justice, receive our inheritance among them that are sanctified.

Methodist General Superintendent: According to the grace given unto our fathers, as witnesses to the Apostolic Gospel and the standard bearers of the Church commissioned to make disciples of all nations, more especially in the manifestation of the Spirit in evangelical zeal and human redemption, the testimony of spiritual experience, and the ministry of sacred song, receive ye our inheritance among them that are sanctified.

All: We glory in the grace given unto us in this goodly heritage.

Chairman of General Council of Local Union Churches: According to the grace given unto our fathers, as witnesses to the Apostolic Gospel and standard bearers of the Church commissioned to make disciples of all nations, more especially in the manifestation of the Spirit in the furtherance of community life within the Kingdom of God, and of the principle, in things essential unity and in things secondary liberty, receive ye our inheritance among them that are sanctified.

All: We glory in the grace given unto us in this goodly heritage.

With all reverently standing, the prayer commemorating the faithful was uttered by Dr. Chown.

Eternal God, the faithful Creator and Lover of all men, before whom stand the spirits of the

living and the dead, we praise Thee for all those through whom Thou hast blessed us in our earthly welfare; for those who kept the faith and witnessed a good confession, upholding truth and resisting evil unto the uttermost; for all who laboured for liberty, justice and brotherhood; for those who in life and death have quickened our lives, and through whose sacrifice we live.

O Lord, grant that their devotion may bear good fruit in us and in the generations that come after us, that we leave not their work unfinished, but in the might of such faith and love may ever strive for a cleaner earth and a closer heaven.

Sanctify the ties that bind us to the Unseen, that we may hold the faithful dead in continued remembrance; that the blessing of their fidelity and fortitude may rest upon us; that with cleansed hearts, strengthened wills, and faith confirmed we may walk with humble, steadfast steps the way that leadeth unto life.

Rejoicing in the communion of saints, grant that we with them may finally be partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom; when, made like unto Christ, we shall behold Him with unclouded vision and undivided love; and by Christ, with all Thy Church, holy and unspotted, shall be presented before the presence of Thy glory with exceeding joy.

Grant it, O heavenly Father, for His sake, to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Minister: Now, therefore, in the sight of all the congregations of the Lord and in the audience of our God, keep and search for the commandments of the Lord our God, that ye may possess this good land and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you for ever.

All: We now, the people of this Church of Christ, compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, grateful for our heritage, mindful of the sacrifice of the fathers whose work is not made perfect without us, do dedicate ourselves as heirs together of such precious gifts, unto the service of Almighty God in His kingdom among men.

Ascription (by all in concert): Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church of Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Here followed the authority for Church Union as found in the enactments of the governing bodies of the United Churches.

Whereas the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Methodist Church and the Congregational Churches of Canada by their free and independent action through their governing bodies, and in accordance with their respective constitutions did agree to unite and form one body or denomination of Christians under the name of "The United Church of Canada," on the Basis of Union set out.

And whereas the supreme courts of these three Churches, and the General Council of the Local Union Churches did by resolution approve in principle a Bill to be submitted to the Parliament of Canada for the purpose of incorporating The United Church.

And whereas The United Church of Canada Act has been passed by the Parliament of Canada constituting the three Churches as so united, a body corporate and politic under the name of "The United Church of Canada," and the congregations represented by the General Council of the Local Union Churches have been, by the said Act, admitted to and declared to be congregations of The United Church of Canada.

And whereas the said Act ratifies and confirms the Basis of Union above set out as the basis upon which the said Churches have been united.

And whereas the three uniting Churches have appointed the undersigned as their respective representatives on the First General Council of The United Church.

Now, therefore, we, the duly appointed representatives of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Methodist Church, the Congregational Churches of Canada, and the General Council of the Local Union Churches respectively, on the First General Council of The United Church of Canada, do hereby subscribe our names to the said Basis of Union.

GEORGE CAMPBELL PIDGEON,

*Moderator of the General Assembly of
the Presbyterian Church in Canada.*

SAMUEL DWIGHT CHOWN,

*General Superintendent of the Methodist
Church of Canada.*

WILLIAM HENRY WARRINER,

*Chairman of the Congregational Union
of Canada.*

CHARLES SPURGEON ELSEY,

*Chairman of the General Council of the
Local Union Churches.*

To the General Superintendent of the Methodist Church fell the honour of pronouncing the three historic Christian bodies concerned to be one communion within the Body of Christ.

The Basis of Union was signed also by 316 Commissioners, representing respectively the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Methodist Church, the Congregational Church in Canada, and the General Council of the Local Union Churches.

Prayer was then offered constituting the General Council of The United Church (all reverently bowing down) as follows:

O God Almighty, Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who loved the Church and gave Himself for it; Thou who on the day of Pentecost didst shed the Holy Spirit upon the Church waiting for the promise of the Father; we wait before Thee with one heart, that the same Lord Jesus may be made known in the midst of us, our only King and Head; and the same Holy Spirit, breathing upon us, may dispense among us His manifold gifts of grace and truth. Confirm, we

beseech Thee, with the witness and unction of Thy Spirit the union of Thy people now consummated in this feast of fellowship and love. As Thou hast made us one in body, grant that our hearts may be melted and flow together into a living unity, that we together may join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.

More especially, as we who are duly appointed delegates of the Churches thus made one, do solemnly with prayer and thanksgiving in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Head of the Church, now constitute the General Council of The United Church of Canada, let Thy Holy Spirit seal this act, and sanctify this chief court of Thy Church. O Blessed and Abiding Spirit, endue this Council and all its members and all the congregation of the Lord with heavenly wisdom; enlighten them with true knowledge of Thy word; inspire them with pure zeal for Thy glory; rule their hearts in all things; and so order all their doings that unity and peace shall prevail, that truth and righteousness shall flow from them, and that by their endeavours all Thy ministers and Churches shall be refreshed and established, Thy Gospel everywhere purely preached and truly followed, Thy kingdom among men extended and strengthened, and the whole body of Thy people grow up into Him who is Head over all things to the Church, Jesus Christ.

Hear the prayers and the praises we severally

offer unto Thee in silent devotion. Bless all the high solemnities and the quickening promise of this beginning of days and years. And let great grace be upon all who love the Lord Jesus Christ: for His sake.

All Members of the General Council saying in concert:

Amen. Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
And lighten with celestial fire:
Thou the anointing Spirit art,
Who dost Thy sevenfold gifts impart.

Thus passed into history this unique and spiritually sublime event.

CHAPTER XI

RESULTS

AT the request of *The Presbyterian Magazine*, an official publication of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, the Rev. W. T. Gunn, M.A., D.D., the present Moderator of The United Church of Canada, wrote an article which was published in that magazine, entitled the "Canadian Union Church."

By reason of his many opportunities of seeing the work of The United Church in the whole Dominion and Newfoundland, and his visits to many of the mission fields, his testimony as to the results achieved by this new adventure of faith will fill an important place, and do a great service in this volume. It will be seen that he describes with fullness of knowledge aspects of the subject which have scarcely been referred to in previous chapters.

His article is a satisfactory reply to the question so often asked, "Has the union been a success?"

Dr. Gunn writes:

In a variety of ways, the three Churches had, at the time of union, anticipated that consummation in almost thirteen hundred pastoral charges, with at least three thousand preaching places. The

saving to the Churches through this co-operation is beyond estimation. In one district alone, that of New Ontario, in the North, this co-operation resulted in a saving of eighty men and fifty thousand dollars a year to the Methodist and Presbyterian Home Mission Boards, and left the work better done.

It is significant that, after the formation of The United Church of Canada, the demand for community Churches ceased, the desire for local unity, simplicity of faith and breadth of fellowship apparently having found complete satisfaction in The United Church.

The Sunday School papers and publications of the three Churches were, even previous to union, issued in common, with evident advantages in larger circulation and economy of production.

Our Theological Colleges, where they existed in the same city, also combined their staffs and their students, bringing the enthusiasm of larger classes and enabling the professors to specialize in their instruction.

Since the union in 1925, in addition to the benefits outlined above, we have effected additional efficiency and economy in administration. The twenty-six boards of the three Churches are now combined in six. Our headquarters' staff has, with care and consideration for the men and interests involved, been reduced by about sixteen officers and many thousands of dollars' expense. Our fifteen Theological Colleges have combined in eight, each strategically located in connection with one of our Provincial Universities.

Our young people have rallied to the work of The United Church, and in one year since union 8,214 Teacher Training Certificates were issued, four times the total number issued in any one year by the three Churches separately.

Our three Church papers were combined in one, and our three Missionary papers were amalgamated in one for the general work of our Church, and one for the work of the Woman's Missionary Society.

During the four and a half years since union, over six hundred churches have joined in about three hundred local unions, with increased strength and efficiency. Over four hundred charges have, through reorganization and additions to their membership, come to self-support in the same time. This has made it possible to open, during these years, almost three hundred new pastoral charges, with probably a full thousand preaching places, and nearly five hundred new Sunday schools. In this way we have been able to follow the new developments of our country, and our United Church missionaries will be found in mining camps and pulpwood towns on the frontiers of settlement in a way which the separate Churches could never have equalled.

In addition to all this, there have been several millions of dollars put into new church buildings all over the country. Our colleges are now successfully raising a million and a half dollars for additional equipment, and our Pension Fund plans for the raising of \$3,000,000, shortly to come into effect, which will put that important part of our work upon a new and stronger basis.

Giving to the general work of the Church has increased twenty per cent. over the giving of the same people in the three Churches previous to union. Certainly our laymen appreciate the work and plans of The United Church, its efficiency and simplicity in preaching the Gospel, and their personal contributions to the spread of the work are away beyond the scale of giving in the three Churches previous to union.

"But you have cut yourselves off from the mother Churches." Not at all! We rejoice with joy unspeakable in the threefold inheritance of the glorious history, the mighty leaders, the martyrs, the great achievements of all three mother Churches. We visit their shrines, we picture them in our pageants. John Knox and the Covenanters, John Wesley and the circuit riders, John Robinson and the Pilgrim Fathers, belong to us all and we are enriched thereby. The ties, far from being cut, are greatly strengthened and enlarged.

By the grace of the mother Churches, The United Church of Canada is, at one and the same time, a constituent member of "The Alliance of Reformed Churches Throughout the World holding the Presbyterian form of Government," of "The Ecumenical Methodist Conference," and also of "The International Congregational Council." We rejoice in this mighty and unprecedented fellowship. We draw upon all three for leadership and inspiration, and it may be we shall have something to give in our turn, for, surely, if one Church can, at the same time, be a member of all three great Church families, that fact may help some day to draw them all together.

"Do we really enjoy the new mixed fellowship?" Beyond all our expectations! Twenty years ago the Joint Church Union Committee expected that it would take a generation for our people to love the new Church as well as they loved the Churches in which they had been born and brought up. To our happy surprise, we found that we had been united before we met. As one of our good Scottish University Presidents said, "I have been looking for those 'temperamental differences' and cannot find them. They are all just 'plain bunk'!" The fact is that visitors to our United Church meetings

find that it is impossible to guess our former Church affiliations either on the platform or in the pew, and we ourselves have ceased to pay much attention to them.

During all the twenty years of negotiations and, during these first four years of The United Church of Canada, there has never been one single vote divided upon the old denominational lines. The simplicity of faith, the breadth of fellowship and the greatness of our combined work captured the hearts of our people from the very first day. At our last General Council in 1928 in Winnipeg, there was such a general spirit of happy affection that man after man of the three former Churches came to the Moderator saying that never in the former bodies had they experienced so united and affectionate a meeting. We were conscious that the love of God had been shed abroad in our hearts for one another and for our new Church.

A great and growing joy to us all has been the exploration of the work which the three Churches have brought together in the new United Church.

In the home fields, which now include Newfoundland and Bermuda with Canada, we have sixteen hundred home missionaries preaching the Gospel in three times as many preaching places. Our missionaries, in ten languages in the lands overseas and over twenty-five languages within Canada, are bringing to men "in their own tongue wherein they were born, the wonderful works of God." The great mission fields of the three Churches, now brought together, are so situated that the sun never sets upon the work of The United Church of Canada.

This illuminating summary by Dr. Gunn of the results of Church Union conveys strong

assurance that if the men and women associated with the consummation of The United Church of Canada have endured some conflict in bringing their venture of faith to the success therein described, and if they must, like King David, pass to their reward without seeing the completion of the temple of a united Christendom, they may look forward in confidence to the time when the Solomons of the future will rejoice in the work so well begun.

APPENDIX A

DECLARATION FROM THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA ACT

(14-15 George V, Chap. 100, Sec. 28)

"Notwithstanding anything in this Act contained, it is hereby declared:

"(a) That the said union of the negotiating Churches has been formed by the free and independent action of the said Churches through their governing bodies and in accordance with their respective constitutions, and that this Act has been passed at the request of the said Churches in order to incorporate The United Church and to make necessary provision with respect to the property of the negotiating Churches and the other matters dealt with by this Act.

"(b) That nothing in this Act contained shall be deemed to limit the independent and exclusive right and power of The United Church to legislate in all matters concerning its doctrine, worship, discipline and government, including therein the right and power from time to time to frame, adopt, alter, change, add to or modify its laws, subordinate standards and formulas and to determine and declare the same or any of them, but subject to the conditions and safeguards in that behalf contained in the Basis of Union.

"(c) That The United Church by virtue of its independent and exclusive right and power to legislate in respect of the matters mentioned in the next preceding subsection has the right to unite with any other Church or religious denomination

without loss of its identity upon such terms as it may find to be consistent with the principles, doctrines and religious standards set forth in the Basis of Union, or any amendment thereof made by the General Council under the provisions of the Basis of Union."

APPENDIX B

THE CREED OF THE UNITED CHURCH

Article I. *Of God.* We believe in the one only living and true God, a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being and perfections; the Lord Almighty, *who is love*, most just in all His ways, most glorious in holiness, unsearchable in wisdom, plenteous in mercy, full of compassion, and abundant in goodness and truth. We worship Him in the unity of the Godhead and the mystery of the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, three persons of the same substance, equal in power and glory.

Article II. *Of Revelation.* We believe that God has revealed Himself in nature, in history, and in the heart of man; that He has been graciously pleased to make clearer revelation of Himself to men of God who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit; and that in the fulness of time He has perfectly revealed Himself in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, who is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person. We receive the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, given by inspiration of God, as containing the only infallible rule of faith and life, a faithful record of God's gracious revelations, and as the sure witness to Christ.

Article III. *Of the Divine Purpose.* We believe that the eternal, wise, holy and loving purpose of God so embraces all events that while the freedom of man is not taken away, nor is God the author of sin, yet in His providence He makes all things

work together in the fulfilment of His sovereign design and the manifestation of His glory.

Article IV. *Of Creation and Providence.* We believe that God is the creator, upholder and governor of all things; that He is above all His works and in them all; and that He made man in His own image, meet for fellowship with Him, free and able to choose between good and evil, and responsible to his Maker and Lord.

Article V. *Of the Sin of Man.* We believe that our first parents, being tempted, chose evil, and so fell away from God and came under the power of sin, the penalty of which is eternal death; and that, by reason of this disobedience, all men are born with a sinful nature, that we have broken God's law and that no man can be saved but by His grace.

Article VI. *Of the Grace of God.* We believe that God, out of His great love for the world, has given His only begotten Son to be the Saviour of sinners, and in the Gospel freely offers His all-sufficient salvation to all men. We believe also that God, in His own good pleasure, gave to His Son a people, an innumerable multitude, chosen in Christ unto holiness, service and salvation.

Article VII. *Of the Lord Jesus Christ.* We believe in and confess the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and man, who, being the Eternal Son of God, for us men and for our salvation, became truly man, being conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, yet without sin. Unto us He has revealed the Father, by His word and Spirit, making known the perfect will of God. For our redemption He fulfilled all righteousness, offered Himself a perfect sacrifice on the cross, satisfied Divine justice and made propitiation for the sins of the whole world. He

rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven, where He ever intercedes for us. In the hearts of believers He abides for ever as the indwelling Christ; above us and over us all He rules; wherefore, unto Him we render love, obedience and adoration as our Prophet, Priest and King.

Article VIII. *Of the Holy Spirit.* We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who moves upon the hearts of men to restrain them from evil and to incite them unto good, and whom the Father is ever willing to give unto all who ask Him. We believe that He has spoken by holy men of God in making known His truth to men for their salvation: that, through our exalted Saviour, He was sent forth in power to convict the world of sin, to enlighten men's minds in the knowledge of Christ, and to persuade and enable them to obey the call of the Gospel; and that He abides, with the Church, dwelling in every believer as the spirit of truth, of power, of holiness, of comfort and of love.

Article IX. *Of Regeneration.* We believe in the necessity of regeneration, whereby we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus by the Spirit of God, who imparts spiritual life by the gracious and mysterious operation of His power, using as the ordinary means the truths of His word and the ordinances of divine appointment in ways agreeable to the nature of man.

Article X. *Of Faith and Repentance.* We believe that faith in Christ is a saving grace whereby we receive Him, trust in Him, and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered to us in the Gospel, and that this saving faith is always accompanied by repentance, wherein we confess and forsake our sins with full purpose of and endeavour after a new obedience to God.

Article XI. *Of Justification and Sonship.* We believe that God, on the sole ground of the perfect obedience and sacrifice of Christ, pardons those who by faith receive Him as their Saviour and Lord, accepts them as righteous and bestows upon them the adoption of sons, with a right to all the privileges therein implied, including a conscious assurance of their sonship.

Article XII. *Of Sanctification.* We believe that those who are regenerated and justified grow in the likeness of Christ through fellowship with Him, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and obedience to the truth; that a holy life is the fruit of saving faith; and that the believer's hope of continuance in such a life is in the preserving grace of God. And we believe that in this growth in grace Christians may attain that maturity and full assurance of faith whereby the love of God is made perfect in us.

Article XIII. *Of Prayer.* We believe that we are encouraged to draw near to God, our Heavenly Father, in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and on our own behalf and that of others to pour out our hearts humbly yet freely before Him, as becomes His beloved children, giving Him the honour and praise due His holy name, asking Him to glorify Himself on earth as in heaven, confessing unto Him our sins and seeking of Him every gift needful for this life and for our everlasting salvation. We believe also that, inasmuch as all true prayer is prompted by His Spirit, He will in response thereto grant us every blessing according to His unsearchable wisdom and the riches of His grace in Jesus Christ.

Article XIV. *Of the Law of God.* We believe that the moral law of God, summarized in the Ten

Commandments, testified to by the prophets and unfolded in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, stands for ever in truth and equity, and is not made void by faith, but on the contrary is established thereby. We believe that God requires of every man to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God; and that only through this harmony with the will of God shall be fulfilled that brotherhood of man wherein the kingdom of God is to be made manifest.

Article XV. *Of the Church.* We acknowledge one holy Catholic Church, the innumerable company of saints of every age and nation, who being united by the Holy Spirit to Christ their Head are one body in Him and have communion with their Lord and with one another. Further, we receive it as the will of Christ that His Church on earth should exist as a visible and sacred brotherhood, consisting of those who profess faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to Him, together with their children, and other baptized children, and organized for the confession of His name, for the public worship of God, for the administration of the sacraments, for the upbuilding of the saints, and for the universal propagation of the Gospel; and we acknowledge as a part, more or less pure, of this universal brotherhood, every particular Church throughout the world which professes this faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to Him as divine Lord and Saviour.

Article XVI. *Of the Sacraments.* We acknowledge two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which were instituted by Christ, to be of perpetual obligation as signs and seals of the covenant ratified in His precious blood, as means of grace, by which, working in us, He doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and comfort our faith

in Him, and as ordinances through the observance of which His Church is to confess her Lord and be visibly distinguished from the rest of the world.

Article XVII. *Of the Ministry.* We believe that Jesus Christ, as the Supreme Head of the Church, has appointed therein a ministry of the word and sacrament and calls men to this ministry; that the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, recognizes and chooses those whom He calls, and should thereupon duly ordain them to the work of the ministry.

Article XVIII. *Of Church Order and Fellowship.* We believe that the Supreme and only Head of the Church is the Lord Jesus Christ; that its worship, teaching, discipline and government should be administered according to His will by persons chosen for their fitness and duly set apart to their office; and that although the visible Church may contain unworthy members and is liable to err, yet believers ought not lightly to separate themselves from its communion, but are to live in fellowship with their brethren, which fellowship is to be extended, as God gives opportunity, to all who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.

Article XIX. *Of the Resurrection, the Last Judgment and the Future Life.* We believe that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust, through the power of the Son of God, who shall come to judge the living and the dead; that the finally impenitent shall go away into eternal punishment and the righteous into life eternal.

Article XX. *Of Christian Service and the Final Triumph.* We believe that it is our duty as disciples and servants of Christ, to further the extension of His kingdom, to do good unto all men, to maintain

the public and private worship of God, to hallow the Lord's Day, to preserve the inviolability of marriage and the sanctity of the family, to uphold the just authority of the State and so to live in all honesty, purity and charity that our lives shall testify of Christ. We joyfully receive the word of Christ, bidding His people go into all the world and make disciples of all nations, declaring unto them that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and that He will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. We confidently believe that by His power and grace all His enemies shall finally be overcome, and the kingdoms of this world be made the kingdom of our God and of His Christ.

APPENDIX C

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH

1. The members of The United Church shall be the members of the negotiating Churches, and such others as may hereafter become members.

2. The unit of organization for The United Church shall be the pastoral charge. A pastoral charge may consist of more than one local church; a local church is a body of persons meeting for public worship in one place.

3. The governing bodies or courts of the Church, higher than those of the pastoral charge, shall be: The Presbytery; The Conference; The General Council.

THE PASTORAL CHARGE (CIRCUIT OR CONGREGATION)

A.—Charges existing previous to the Union

4. In the management of their local affairs the various churches, charges, circuits or congregations of the negotiating Churches shall be entitled to continue the organization and practices (including those practices relating to membership, church ordinances, Sunday schools and Young People's Societies) enjoyed by them at the time of the union, subject in general affairs to the legislation, principles and discipline of The United Church. Their representatives in the next higher governing body or court shall be chosen as at present.

5. The plan of organization prescribed for pastoral charges to be formed subsequent to the union may at any time be adopted by any church, charge,

circuit or congregation existing at the time of the union.

6. Subject to the provisions of the next succeeding paragraph hereof, all property, real and personal, under the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Canada held in trust for or to the use of a church, charge, circuit or congregation of any of the negotiating Churches, shall be held by trustees appointed by or on behalf of such church, charge, circuit or congregation, upon trusts set forth and declared in a Model Trust Deed. This Model Trust Deed should be a schedule to the Act, and should contain, among others, a provision to the following effect: That the property is held for the church, charge, circuit or congregation as a part of The United Church, and that no property so held shall be sold, exchanged, or in any manner encumbered, unless the Presbytery shall, at the instance of the church, charge, circuit or congregation, have given its sanction, subject to an appeal, if desired, to the Conference.

7. Any property or funds owned by a church, charge, circuit or congregation at the time of the union solely for its own benefit, or vested in trustees for the sole benefit of such church, charge, circuit or congregation, and not for the denomination of which the said church, charge, circuit or congregation formed a part, shall not be affected by the legislation giving effect to the union or by any legislation of The United Church without the consent of the church, charge, circuit or congregation for which such property is held in trust.

8. Churches, charges, circuits, or congregations, received subsequent to the union, into The United Church, with the approval of Presbyteries, shall be entitled, if they so desire, to the privileges of sections 4, 5 and 7.

B.—Charges to be formed subsequent to the Union

9. The liberty of the pastoral charge shall be recognized to the fullest extent compatible with:

(a) The oversight of the spiritual interests of the charge by the minister (or ministers) and a body of men specially chosen and set apart or ordained for that work, who shall jointly constitute the session;

(b) The efficient co-operation of the representatives of the various departments of the work of the charge by means of a meeting to be held at least quarterly;

(c) The hearty co-operation of the various pastoral charges in the general work of the Church, and

(d) The exercise by the higher governing bodies or courts of their powers and functions, hereinafter set forth.

10. New pastoral charges or local churches shall be formed with the consent of a Presbytery by persons residing within its bounds, who declare their adherence to the principles of The United Church, and their desire for the formation of such charge or church. Missions may be organized as pastoral charges by Presbytery of its own motion, or on the suggestion of the Missionary Superintendent or the Minister, under such regulations as the General Council may pass.

Before sanctioning the formation of a pastoral charge or local church, the Presbytery shall be required to hear and consider the representations of any pastoral charge that may be affected by the proposed action.

11. (a) The members of the Church entitled to all church privileges are those who, on a profession of their faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to Him, have been received into full membership. The

children of such persons and all baptized children are members of the Church, and it is their duty and privilege, when they reach the age of discretion, to enter into full membership. Admission to full membership, and granting of certificates of removal shall be by the action of the session, and by the action of those in full membership where desired by the pastoral charge.

(b) The members of a local church who are entitled to vote at all meetings are persons in full membership, whose names are on the roll of the church. With the consent of these, adherents who contribute regularly to the support of the church may vote on temporal matters.

12. The members of a local church shall meet annually, and more frequently if they deem it advisable.

13. The Session shall have oversight of the spiritual interests of the pastoral charge. The management of its temporal and financial affairs shall be entrusted to a Committee of Stewards. The Official Board, consisting of the Session and Committee of Stewards, with representatives in full church membership of such other departments of church work as may be agreed upon by the General Council, shall meet quarterly, and more frequently if they deem it advisable, for the consideration of matters of joint interest.

14. The members of the session, other than the minister, shall be chosen by those in full church membership, and shall hold office under regulations to be passed by the General Council.

15. (a) It shall be the duty of the session to have the oversight of:

(1) The admission of persons into full membership, and the granting of certificates of removal.

(2) The conduct of members, with power to exercise discipline.

(3) The administration of the sacraments.

(4) The religious training of the young, and the organization of meetings for Christian fellowship, instruction and work.

(5) The order of public worship, including the service of praise and the use of the church edifice.

(6) The care of the poor, and the visiting of the sick.

(b) It shall also be its duty:

(7) To receive and judge petitions, etc., from members.

(8) To transmit petitions, appeals, etc., to Presbytery.

(9) To recommend suitable laymen to Presbyteries for license to preach.

(10) To recommend suitable candidates for the ministry.

16. The stewards shall be chosen by the local church, and, wherever practicable, should be persons in full membership.

It shall be the duty of the Committee of Stewards to secure contributions for the purposes of the local church, and to disburse the moneys received for these purposes.

17. It shall be the duty of the Official Board:

(1) To secure contributions for missionary and other general objects of the Church.

(2) To select representatives, in full church membership, of the pastoral charge to the Presbytery.

(3) To submit to the pastoral charge or local

church for its consideration reports on life and work, including a full statement of receipts and expenditures, of indebtedness and of estimates for the ensuing year.

(4) To transmit from the pastoral charge, through the Presbytery, to the Settlement Committee, representations concerning the pastoral relation.

(5) To attend to matters affecting the pastoral charge not assigned to any of the other bodies.

18. All lands, premises and property acquired for the use of a local church or a pastoral charge of The United Church, shall be held, used and administered under the trusts of the above Model Trust Deed. (See "Polity," par. 6.)

THE PRESBYTERY

19. The Presbytery shall consist of:

(1) The ordained ministers within the bounds—

(a) Who are engaged in some department of church work; and

(b) Who have been placed on the roll by special enactment of the Conference in accordance with regulations to be made by the General Council.

(The rights to membership in Presbyteries, District Meetings, and Associations, enjoyed by ministers at the time of the union, shall be conserved.)

(2) The elders, deacons, leaders or other non-ministerial representatives of pastoral charges, within the bounds, equal in number to the number of ministers, and chosen in accordance with regulations to be made by the General Council.

20. It shall be the duty of the Presbytery:

(1) To have the oversight of the pastoral charges within its bounds, review their records, and form new pastoral charges, or local churches.

(2) To receive and dispose of petitions and appeals from the lower governing bodies or courts.

(3) To transmit petitions and appeals to the higher governing bodies or courts.

(4) To license as preachers laymen who are duly recommended and who after examinations are approved.

(5) To superintend the education of students looking forward to the ministry, and to certify them to theological colleges.

(6) To inquire, each year, into the personal character, doctrinal beliefs and general fitness of candidates for the ministry, recommended by sessions, official boards or local churches; and, when they have fulfilled the prescribed requirements, to license them to preach and to recommend them for the ordination of the Conference.

(7) To induct or install ministers.

(8) To deal with matters sent down by the higher governing bodies or courts.

(9) To adopt measures for promoting the religious life of the pastoral charges within its bounds.

(10) To select non-ministerial representatives to the Conference, of whom at least a majority shall have been previously chosen by pastoral charges to represent them in Presbyteries, and to nominate representatives on the Conference Settlement Committee.

(11) To have the oversight of the conduct of ministers within its bounds.

THE CONFERENCE

21. The Conference shall consist of the ministers on the rolls of the Presbyteries within its bounds, and on equal number of non-ministerial representatives of pastoral charges chosen as provided for in subsection 20 (par. 10).

22. It shall be the duty of the Conference:

(1) To meet every year.

(2) To determine the number and boundaries of the Presbyteries within its bounds, have oversight of them, and review their records.

(3) To receive and dispose of appeals and petitions, subject to the usual right of appeal.

(4) To see that, as far as possible, every pastoral charge within its bounds shall have a pastorate without interruption, and that every effective minister shall have a pastoral charge, and to effect this through a Settlement Committee which it shall appoint annually.

(5) To examine and ordain candidates for the ministry who have fulfilled the prescribed requirements and have been recommended by Presbyteries.

(6) To receive ministers from other Churches subject to the regulations of the General Council.

(7) To deal with matters referred to it by the General Council.

(8) To select an equal number of ministerial and non-ministerial representatives to the General Council.

(9) To have oversight of the religious life of the Church within its bounds, and to adopt such measures as may be judged necessary for its promotion.

THE GENERAL COUNCIL

23. The General Council shall consist of an equal number of ministers and non-ministerial representatives chosen by the Conferences. Its regular meeting shall be held every second year. Its presiding officer shall be the chief executive officer of the Church, and during his term of office he may be relieved of his pastoral or other duties.

24. The General Council shall have full power:

(1) To determine the number and boundaries of the Conferences, have oversight of them, and review their records.

(2) (a) To legislate on matters respecting the doctrine, worship, membership and government of the Church, subject to the conditions: First, that before any rule or law relative to these matters can become a permanent law, it must receive the approval of a majority of the Presbyteries, and, if advisable, pastoral charges also; Second, that no terms of admission to full membership shall be prescribed other than those laid down in the New Testament; and, Third, that the freedom of worship at present enjoyed in the negotiating Churches shall not be interfered with in The United Church.

(b) To legislate on all matters respecting property, subject to the limitations elsewhere provided in the Basis of Union, and subject also to the approval of the Conference in which the property is situated.

(3) To prescribe and regulate the course of study of candidates for the ministry and to regulate the admission of ministers from other Churches.

(4) To receive and dispose of petitions, memorials, etc.

(5) To dispose of appeals.

(6) To determine the missionary policy of the Church, and to provide for the conduct of its missions.

(7) To have charge of the colleges of the Church, and to take what measures are deemed advisable for the promotion of Christian education.

(8) To appoint committees or boards and officers for the different departments of church work, and to receive their reports and give them instructions and authority.

(9) To correspond with other Churches.

(10) And in general to enact such legislation and adopt such measures as may tend to promote true godliness, repress immorality, preserve the unity and well-being of the Church, and advance the kingdom of Christ throughout the world.

NAMES OF THE CHURCH COURTS

The name United Church of Canada was chosen for at least three reasons.

First: the difficulty of framing a composite word of an euphonious character which would combine and do justice to the former names of the uniting Churches.

The present name was also chosen because it expresses the fact of union between the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches in Canada, and because it calls attention to the policy of The United Church "to foster the spirit of unity in the hope that this sentiment may in due time, so far as Canada is concerned, take shape in a Church which may fittingly be described as national."

The name General Council, given to the Supreme

Court of the Church, followed the example of Congregationalism.

The name Conference, given to the highest Executive Court of the Church, followed the practice of Methodism.

The name Presbytery was accepted as following the usage of the Presbyterian Church in respect to the Court having similar duties and powers.

The name Official Board, including for general purposes the Session which is charged with the oversight of the spiritual interests of the charge, and the Committee of Stewards, which has management of the temporal and financial affairs of the same, was chosen on account of its conformity with the fact that it embodies in one Court all the responsible officials of the Pastoral Charge. The duties of the Official Board are set forth in the Basis of Union.

TITLES

The title Moderator of the General Council was chosen not simply because it followed that of the Chief Officer of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, but especially because it is the only title for such an officer which carries an exclusively ecclesiastical significance.

The title of the presiding officer of a Conference is President, and of a Presbytery is Chairman.

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